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Mallette Dean

ARTIST AND PRINTER

An Interview Conducted by

Ruth Teiser

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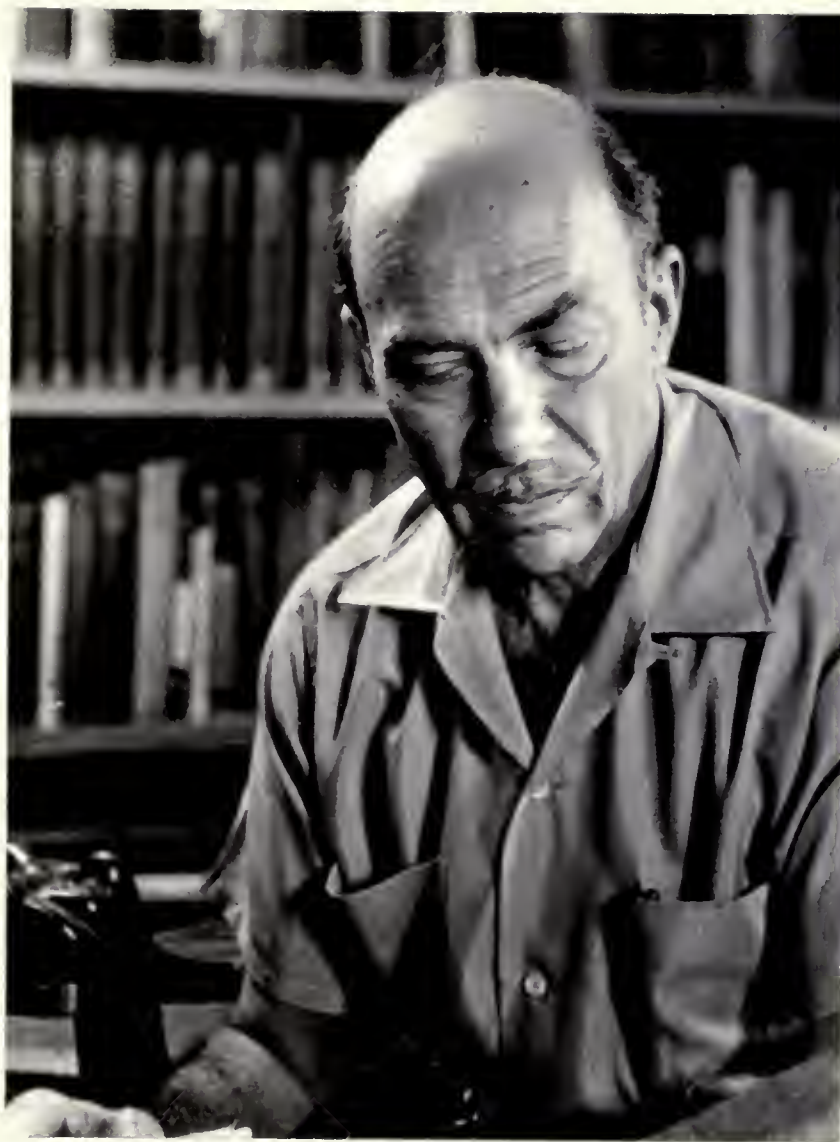
The Regents of the University of California



Mallette Dean
1969

Photo by Ruth Teiser

photo by Ruth Teiser
Mallotte Dean
1969



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INTRODUCTION

Mallette Dean is a versatile artist and craftsman whose works range from murals to wine labels, from furniture to book illustrations, from fine arts prints to printed books. Although this interview largely concerns his book illustrations and printing, it also includes discussion of the whole span of his accomplishments. Many of his talents have contributed to his work as a creator of fine books. Yet he remains primarily an artist and, as he states, "I like a book in which the artist has had a heavy hand."

Born in Spokane, Washington, on March 9, 1907, Mallette Dean came to California to study art, then emerged into the world of the Depression. Like many another young artist of his time, he gained valuable experience in federally financed art projects, then turned his hand ingeniously to many kinds of work through the necessity for making a living. He won a coveted art prize and was privately commissioned to paint a mural. He also designed and built furniture and made Christmas cards. He came to know printing through the Grabhorn Press, for which he made decorations and illustrations. His recollections and analyses of that distinguished printing enterprise are of particular interest.

From his work with the Grabhorn Press developed

Mallette Dean's own interest in printing, and from his press have come more than a dozen books. The Physiologus, which he discusses in this interview, is generally considered his outstanding book. For it he was designer, illustrator, decorator, typesetter, pressman and binder. Working with him on that book, as on several others, was Vivien Neill Dean, whom he married in 1931. Their children are Debora Dean Kerkof, born in 1937, and Donna Dean, born in 1945.

Although initially reluctant to be interviewed, Mr. Dean agreed after Dr. James D. Hart, advisor for the fine printing series, urged the matter. The interview was held in two sessions at the interviewer's studio in San Francisco, on April 25 and April 29, 1969. Because of a defect in the tape recording, some passages in one section had to be reconstructed. Mr. Dean edited carefully, and the final text reflects accurately his thoughtful interest in and enthusiasm for his work.

Ruth Teiser
Interviewer

6 August 1970
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Books and Printing in the San Francisco Bay Area

Interviews Completed by December, 1969

Lewis and Dorothy Allen, Book Printing with The Handpress

Brother Antoninus, Brother Antoninus: Poet, Printer, and Religious

Mallette Dean, Artist and Printer

Edwin Grabhorn, Recollections of the Grabhorn Press

Jane Grabhorn, The Colt Press

Robert Grabhorn, Fine Printing and the Grabhorn Press

James D. Hart, Fine Printers of the San Francisco Bay Area

Warren R. Howell, Two San Francisco Bookmen

Haywood Hunt, Recollections of San Francisco Printers

Lawton Kennedy, A Life In Printing

Oscar Lewis, Literary San Francisco

David Magee, Bookselling and Creating Books

Walter Mann, Photoengraving

Bernhard Schmidt, Herman Diedrichs, Max Schmidt, Jr., The Schmidt Lithograph Company, Vol. I

Lorenz Schmidt, Ernest Wuthman, Steward Norris, The Schmidt Lithograph Company, Vol. II

Albert Sperisen, San Francisco Printers, 1925-1965

Jack W. Stauffacher, A Printed Word Has Its Own Measure

Edward DeWitt Taylor, supplement to interview with Francis Farquhar

Adrian Wilson, Printing and Book Designing

DEVELOPMENT OF AN ARTIST

Teiser: This border on the Book Club of California's Quarterly News-Letter cover -- I have a 1949 issue here -- you did the design?

Dean: Yes. I don't think it's original at all. I remember taking it from something, but I did the drawing in pen and ink. The color is from a linoleum cut.

Teiser: It's from linoleum?

Dean: The color is. As were so many things. Like the color plates for Naval Sketches* and things of that sort. And of course Grabhorn's reproductions of Japanese prints.

Teiser: Did you do the color blocks for the Japanese prints?

Dean: I did many on the first volume.

Teiser: Shall we go back to the beginning? To when and where you were born?

Dean: Well, I was born in Spokane in 1907, went to high school there, and worked for a short time after high school.

Teiser: Were you interested in art as a young fellow?

Dean: In high school I took a few courses, yes. I did

*Meyers, William H., Naval Sketches of the War in California, 1939, printed by the Grabhorn Press.

Dean: drawings, some paintings and crafts. I did some copper work, with etched designs, and went on to etching a plate from which I printed a Christmas card. I think that was a project for someone.

Teiser: I gather you grew up in a not too affluent household?

Dean: It wasn't. I remember working at a very early age. I did all sorts of things, carrying two newspaper routes a day and mowing lawns and shoveling coal in the fall and snow in the winter. There were always lots of things to do, ways to keep me out of doors. I certainly wasn't alone in doing these things. My friends were doing the same things.

Teiser: What did you work at after high school?

Dean: I worked for the Federal Reserve Bank for a while. And then I worked for a short while in the advertising department of a bank. I suppose that was my first taste of what we call commercial art now, because I remember making a design for a billboard. Later an advertising concern such as Foster & Kleiser took it over and made something out of it, but I remember making a start on it anyway.

Then in 1927 I decided to come to California and live with an aunt near Moraga, which was a possible solution to my getting away and going on to study.

Dean: I had wanted to go to Chicago to the Art Institute, but that was an idea that wasn't to come about. It's probably just as well. I lived out at Moraga and commuted to the art school for a couple of years and then. . .

Teiser: This was the California School of Fine Arts in San Francisco?

Dean: Yes. And then I moved to the City and lived over here on Union Street, continued school for a while, and then went to New York for a year.

Teiser: How long were you at the California School of Fine Arts? How long did you study there?

Dean: It was a little over two years.

Teiser: This was when Squire Knowles and all those people were there?

Dean: Yes. Squire was there. I remember meeting Valenti [Angelo] because he lived near me and I was interested in his painting and not too much aware of his working at the [Grabhorn] press. I don't know whether he had really left the press or not. I lived on Macondray [Lane], and Valenti was on Leavenworth.

Teiser: Were you particularly aware of there being fine printers around at that time?

Dean: No, no, I wasn't aware of that.

Teiser: You were simply interested in art?

Dean: I was interested in the graphic arts and painting. studied fresco and tempera and encaustic and other mediums with Ray Boynton, who was a master. He was a friend of Diego [Rivera], of course, had been to Mexico, and worked in these mediums there.

Teiser: What was Boynton like?

Dean: Well, Ray was a very, very wonderful person. He liked the out of doors and certainly was devoted to his work. He never went anywhere without making sketches or drawings, and of course many times he made a painting. And after I started to study with him and got to know him we used to go out quite a bit. He used to take me up the coast, and at one time to Yosemite and up to Donner [Pass] when he did drawings for [George R.] Stewart's book, Ordeal by Hunger.

Teiser: You took classes from him—and then you went out and worked with him informally?

Dean: Yes. And then we worked together on the Federal Art Project, too. He did murals for the Modesto Post Office and I helped him with those. Then, of course, he was engaged in the Coit Tower project along

Dean: with all the rest of the gang. That was a very, very exciting time when all of that was going on.

Teiser: What was your part in the Coit Tower murals?

Dean: Oh, I did two of the full standing figures. Not important, I must say.

Teiser: What are they?

Dean: One is a banker and the other is Michaelson, who invented the interferometer. They're isolated tall, vertical figures.

Teiser: And then did you work on some of the others, too, other people's?

Dean: No, I didn't do actual painting for them. I was with Bob Howard when he had a studio at Sansome and Jackson at the time. I remember working on a ceiling design for the tower that I think Bob was in charge of.

Teiser: How long a period was the Coit Tower period?

Dean: I don't know how long we were actually working on the Tower. It was quite a while. But, of course, the projects -- the Treasury Relief Project first -- let's see, I started in December of '34 and it lasted until August in '37. Then I was transferred to the Federal Art Project, which went to November, 1939.

Teiser: What other notable murals, then, did you work on?

Dean: Oh, I did a small mural for the Sebastopol Post Office.

Teiser: Is it still there?

Dean: Yes. It's ancient -- or rather, very dated.

Teiser: What others?

Dean: Oh, that's about all. I was on an assignment to visit C.C.C.* camps in 1934. We traveled up the coast to the border and made some drawings. I made some prints from them later on. It was in 1934 that I learned about the Grabhorns, and I later went in to see them.

Teiser: Let me go back to this period, and make sure that we have everything important. You worked with Mr. Boynton on what?

Dean: On murals for the Modesto Post Office.

Teiser: Anything else?

Dean: No. Those were done over in Berkeley, I think in the stadium.

Teiser: Are they still at Modesto, do you know?

Dean: I think they're still there.

Teiser: What were the subjects of the murals?

Dean: One subject was agriculture and there was a composition

*Civilian Conservation Corps.

Dean: with miners.

Teiser: And the Sebastopol?

Dean: Sebastopol was chickens and apples, of course.

[Laughter]

Teiser: It must have been a great period.

Dean: It was. For many reasons it was one of the nicest periods of all, I think, because to begin with we were young. We didn't have children yet, and living on next to nothing didn't seem to bother us. Of course, after we got on the federal project it was wonderful. We had lots of money. I mean, \$94 a month, I'm sure, was lots more than many were making. Prior to that, fifty cents a day used to do very nicely, you know. You didn't need much. And living in North Beach -- I always found North Beach a wonderful place to eat for very little. You could get a lot for ten cents.

Teiser: Then you became aware of the Grabhorns in what year?

Dean: 'Thirty-four.

Teiser: And was this your first interest in printing as such?

Dean: My first interest in printing was actually in the period prior to that, when I did a lot of free-lance work in various fields. I designed and built furniture, and my wife was working for -- and also my

Dean: sister -- for Alice Arnstein on Sutter Street, a gift shop, and I used to do work for them. So it was through people I met there that I was given a job for a mural at Mt. Zion Hospital; I remember that was through Mrs. Walter Haas. That was a long time ago. It was a children's mural, children playing, a decorative design.

And then another interesting project I had which brought in some money at the time was making furniture for the Sigmund Stern Grove.

Teiser: You made it or you designed it?

Dean: Both. Mrs. Stern, of course, was Mrs. Haas's mother, and it was through Mrs. Haas I guess that I got that job. At that time, I met Mr. Gelber and Mr. Lilienthal,* and I used to do things occasionally for them. I also met Dorothy Liebes. She had me design large rams heads for one of her looms. A friend carved them in wood.

Teiser: What kind of things did you do for Gelber and Lilienthal?

Dean: Oh, special things, usually special cards that customers wanted. Engravings.

Teiser: You were not doing reproduction at that time, were you?

*Leon Gelber and Theodore Lilienthal of the Gelber-Lilienthal book store.

Dean: Some of them I printed, but it was before I had a printing press. I used to do them on a letterpress. The next press I got after that was a copper plate press, which was good for etching and copper engravings, but I also did linoleum cuts on it. I mean, individual hand printing.

Teiser: When did you get the copper plate press?

Dean: Oh, that was probably about '35, or not long after I started to work on the government projects.

Teiser: But before that you had done other reproductions?

Dean: A little bit. It wasn't until 1939 that I bought the Colt's Armory that I have now.

Teiser: How did you become interested in the Grabhorns?

Dean: Well [to go back], we had this trip up the coast as part of a Treasury Relief Art Project. We had stopped by Scott Bar, which was a placer gold mining town, to see some friends we had met here in San Francisco. Particularly, the Ford brothers, who had some gold mines and were working some old drifts. And they said, "Why don't you come up here and camp? It's a wonderful place, with good fishing, swimming and of course gold mining." I enjoy fishing and outdoor life, so after returning to San Francisco we decided to do just that. My sister and her husband,

Dean: and my wife and I went to Scott Bar and stayed there in the summer of '34 -- the time of the bloody water-front strike. My brother-in-law sold his copy of the Grabhorn Leaves of Grass to finance their part of the trip. I think he got \$25 for it!

Our transportation was a 1918 car given to me in return for taking my aunt's Irish setter along with us. She was going to New York. We had a German shepherd, so the old Cad coupe, with two dogs, four people, tent, gold rocker (which I made before we left Telegraph Hill), books, food and clothing, et cetera, was loaded! We were given permission to camp on wild Mill Creek, a tributary of the Scott River. The property was owned by the Lighthill brothers -- two old gentlemen who farmed and mined on their homestead. The older brother had been a stagecoach driver in Siskiyou County.

We had a marvelous three months up there. And it was during that time that we became acquainted with Bob Weinstock, who knew the Grabhorns. Bob said, "You ought to know the Grabhorn Press. They do fine printing, and it's possible they could use some of your work."

Another interesting thing happened on that trip.

Dean: We met Jim [James D.] Hart. His father and Bob Weinstock's were friends. Jim and his father were visiting the Weinstocks. So after leaving Scott Bar in the fall of '34, I contacted the Grabhorn Press and eventually they decided I could do a few things for them.

Teiser: When you say "contacted the Grabhorn Press," was that one of the curious meetings that people keep describing?

Dean: Yes. They were very strange. It was a case of going and standing around and wondering whether you were going to be seen or not, and, well, eventually you are.

Teiser: Who saw you? Bob or Ed?

Dean: I think I talked with Ed. Ed was very noncommittal. He didn't know whether he could manage or not. He said I should come back maybe another time, and after several such visits he gave me some little thing to do. I think I started by engraving initials for some little job. And the first book, I remember, was in 1935; it was Captivity of the Oatman Girls,* for which

*For this and other titles not otherwise identified, see Appendix: "A Check List of Books Illustrated and/or Printed by Mallette Dean," compiled by Duncan H. Olmsted.

Dean: I made wood engravings on end-grain boxwood.

Teiser: Had you been doing some wood engraving as well as linoleum cutting?

Dean: No. I hadn't done engraving until just prior to going to the Grabhorn Press really. I hadn't learned much about it.

Teiser: Is there a distinction between cutting linoleum and engraving wood?

Dean: Decidedly.

Teiser: I mean, are these the terms -- you "cut" linoleum and "engrave" wood?

Dean: Those terms are generally used, yes. Engraving is done with solid tools, as initials are engraved on jewelry or an ornament is engraved on the metal of guns. Cutting can be done with a knife or gouges. The density of end-grain boxwood makes for greater restrictions and finer work. The softness of linoleum allows for speed, and a variety of tools, such as knives, gouges, razor blades, et cetera may be used.

Teiser: Had you studied wood engraving at all?

Dean: No, that I had to learn on my own. I found that one of the teachers at the art school, Nelson Pool, was familiar with wood engraving and he gave me a piece

Dean: of boxwood. Then I learned that Ray Boynton had done some engraving, so I learned about tools from him. This presented a new medium in which to work, and I became very fascinated with it. One of the first prints I made was when I was still living out at Moraga. I did a landscape of that area. The Museum* reprinted it for a Christmas card.

Teiser: I have one, and I got it at the Museum. That's mentioned in the article Jane Grabhorn wrote about you in the winter 1946 Book Club of California Quarterly News-Letter.

Dean: Well, aside from our wedding announcement, which was engraved lettering only, I think that was my first wood engraving.

Teiser: This one won the Art Association prize?

Dean: That's right. I wasn't going to enter it, but my wife said, "You'd better put it in the show."

Teiser: When was this?

Dean: Oh, that must have been in 1939.

*San Francisco Museum of Art.

WORKING WITH THE GRABHORN PRESS

Dean: And after that, and after having done the engravings for The Captivity of the Oatman Girls, I did very few engravings for the Grabhorns. I did engrave boxwood initials for them from time to time.

Teiser: Did the initials that you did for the Grabhorns become part of their type. . .

Dean: Yes. And there was an alphabet I did for them which they used -- just the capitals, large initials -- which they used occasionally.

Teiser: When did they use them?

Dean: Just whenever they needed a large initial and happened to like that particular letter. They had a large selection of initial letters designed by different artists.

Teiser: The initials that you did, are they decorative or simple?

Dean: [I did] both. Of course I did many, many initials. Some for books and some for single copy things.

Teiser: I mean the alphabet -- was it simple or decorative?

Dean: It was of simple Roman letters.

Teiser: The technique of making alphabets and initials type-high must be difficult.

Dean: I wasn't concerned about that. I didn't have to worry about it. Many times they would have photo-engravings made from my black and white drawings. In other words, it didn't get to the point of being cast.

When a letter is engraved on boxwood, the wood is type-high. If it's a linoleum letter, the linoleum is mounted on a piece of wood to bring it up to type-high.

Teiser: Did you do that work?

Dean: Yes. We'd find a scrap of 3/4 inch wood somewhere and just stick the linoleum to it. [Laughter]

Teiser: Well, that's very meticulous work, is it not?

Dean: Well, you have to be careful of what we call a high cut. The block has to be very close to being type-high, especially when printed along with type. The most elaborate set of decorative initials I made I think was for the Kaiser speeches in 1945. That was a very limited edition. I think there were only something like thirty-two books printed.

Teiser: Henry J. Kaiser?

Dean: Yes. Those were drawings illustrating the speeches. I didn't get a copy of that book but I have engraver's proofs of the work* That work was done in Fairfax

*Kaiser, Henry J. Twenty-Six Addresses.

Dean: after I left the press.

Teiser: Let me go back and take up the Colt Press. I know that you did the Colt design.

Dean: Yes, I did many colts for Jane [Grabhorn]. [Looking at cover of Catalogue of an Exhibition of the Typographic Work of Jane Grabhorn, 1956] This is perhaps the one she liked best. This little one [on page 14 of the catalogue], I've forgotten what it was used for. This one [on page 5] is by Otis Oldfield.

Teiser: Are there many people who can work in as many media as you?

Dean: Oh, I'm sure many artists have tried most of them.

Teiser: But you have actually worked in so many.

Dean: It's most exciting, especially when you can combine things. It's exciting to be able to set type and then combine your own wood engravings or cuts with it.

Teiser: Looking through this Jane Grabhorn catalogue at the books you have worked on . . . Lola Montez . . .

Dean: Lola Montez had quite a few cuts.

Teiser: You did them all?

Dean: Yes.

Teiser: And The Epicure in Hawaii and The Terry-Broderick Duel?

Dean: Yes.

Teiser: You're all through this catalogue, of course. George R. Stewart's Take Your Bible in One Hand.

Dean: Those are the small marginal ones [cuts].

Teiser: Did they or you choose the subjects when they wanted you to illustrate a book?

Dean: Well, many times the text would suggest illustrations or decorations, which was more often the case. Bob and Jane would ok my sketches or give me their own ideas to work from. I usually made my own suggestions first, then changed them if necessary.

Teiser: Did they ask you to do work over ever?

Dean: I can't recall a particular case of having been asked to do work over, but I have done it many times.

Teiser: Did you dig up your own scrap or did they. . .

Dean: Oh, they had a tremendous amount of material. Everything I needed could be found there. Sometimes I would find it, and sometimes it was given to me. I think one of the longer projects was The Discovery of Florida, where all of the work was in initials, and quite decorative, and of all different sizes. Some would go across the page and some would be just small rectangles set into the type. The title page was an enlargement of the text page work, a combination of larger initials and decoration. The latter was

Dean: usually a leaf motif.

And I can remember at that time it was a matter of just putting down lots of ideas in rough sketch form and then deciding on those that Bob and Ed liked best. For the most part Ed was never too particular about what the artists did. He could usually improve it when it got to the press.

Teiser: Was Bob more particular?

Dean: I think Bob was, yes. I think Ed once told someone: The better the art the worse the book, or something like that. [Laughter]

Teiser: Does that indicate that he didn't want to be outshone?

Dean: I think so.

Teiser: I see the Henry Miller Colossus of Marquessi* in the Jane Grabhorn catalogue. . .

Dean: That was not original work. My work was based on Henry Miller's drawings.

Teiser: Yes. And The Journal of Julius Rodman.

Dean: Julius Rodman was all linoleum cuts, with colors printed by means of cardboard cuts.

Teiser: The Jane Grabhorn catalogue says they were wood engravings.

*San Francisco: Colt Press, 1941.

Dean: They were not.

Teiser: You worked up the material?

Dean: Yes. Some were original and some taken from early prints. The landscape of mountains and river was original. There's a hunting scene that was taken from a work by Catlin. The landscape with beavers is mine. There's a bear picture taken in part from an old print.

Teiser: And the engravings were done in color. Was that black line plus color?

Dean: Linoleum cuts printed in black plus color from a solid plate. That particular job was printed by one of Ed's special techniques, a little difficult to describe. The color was printed from a solid block by using a cardboard cutout of color areas attached to the tympan sheet on the platen.

Teiser: Was this the way in general that the Japanese prints were done?

Dean: No, I don't think any of those were done that way.

Teiser: Was it in effect a secret process?

Dean: Oh, at one time there were many things that were very much a secret, and would be done without anyone's finding out too much about them.

Teiser: Well, maybe that's still the case. Do you feel it's

Teiser: something you should not discuss?

Dean: No, I think it's fairly well known [now].

Teiser: Is it still used?

Dean: Oh, I use it a great deal. It's a simplified method of printing color from a solid block. In other words without having to engrave the printing block. The solid block is locked in the chase. A cardboard cutout of areas to receive color is attached to the tympan sheet on the platen. The sheet to be printed, placed over the card, will receive ink only where it is backed by the card.

Teiser: And this was developed by Grabhorn himself?

Dean:45 I can't say that it was completely original with Ed but it might have been.

Teiser: Was it in part a way to save costs?

Dean: Well, it certainly saves time -- yes, and costs. It's a marvelous way of getting a pleasing result without having to send work out to a photoengraver. And it's highly effective in many ways. In other words, it could give you a result that can't be obtained by these other methods. The fact that it's all done by hand assures an interesting result. And control of inking along with make-ready methods were very important.

TABLE 1	THE RESULTS OF THE SURVEY	TABLE 2
1. The first group of respondents (100%)	The first group of respondents (100%)	The first group of respondents (100%)
2. The second group of respondents (100%)	The second group of respondents (100%)	The second group of respondents (100%)
3. The third group of respondents (100%)	The third group of respondents (100%)	The third group of respondents (100%)
4. The fourth group of respondents (100%)	The fourth group of respondents (100%)	The fourth group of respondents (100%)
5. The fifth group of respondents (100%)	The fifth group of respondents (100%)	The fifth group of respondents (100%)
6. The sixth group of respondents (100%)	The sixth group of respondents (100%)	The sixth group of respondents (100%)
7. The seventh group of respondents (100%)	The seventh group of respondents (100%)	The seventh group of respondents (100%)
8. The eighth group of respondents (100%)	The eighth group of respondents (100%)	The eighth group of respondents (100%)
9. The ninth group of respondents (100%)	The ninth group of respondents (100%)	The ninth group of respondents (100%)
10. The tenth group of respondents (100%)	The tenth group of respondents (100%)	The tenth group of respondents (100%)
11. The eleventh group of respondents (100%)	The eleventh group of respondents (100%)	The eleventh group of respondents (100%)
12. The twelfth group of respondents (100%)	The twelfth group of respondents (100%)	The twelfth group of respondents (100%)
13. The thirteenth group of respondents (100%)	The thirteenth group of respondents (100%)	The thirteenth group of respondents (100%)
14. The fourteenth group of respondents (100%)	The fourteenth group of respondents (100%)	The fourteenth group of respondents (100%)
15. The fifteenth group of respondents (100%)	The fifteenth group of respondents (100%)	The fifteenth group of respondents (100%)
16. The sixteenth group of respondents (100%)	The sixteenth group of respondents (100%)	The sixteenth group of respondents (100%)
17. The seventeenth group of respondents (100%)	The seventeenth group of respondents (100%)	The seventeenth group of respondents (100%)
18. The eighteenth group of respondents (100%)	The eighteenth group of respondents (100%)	The eighteenth group of respondents (100%)
19. The nineteenth group of respondents (100%)	The nineteenth group of respondents (100%)	The nineteenth group of respondents (100%)
20. The twentieth group of respondents (100%)	The twentieth group of respondents (100%)	The twentieth group of respondents (100%)
21. The twenty-first group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-first group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-first group of respondents (100%)
22. The twenty-second group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-second group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-second group of respondents (100%)
23. The twenty-third group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-third group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-third group of respondents (100%)
24. The twenty-fourth group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-fourth group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-fourth group of respondents (100%)
25. The twenty-fifth group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-fifth group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-fifth group of respondents (100%)
26. The twenty-sixth group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-sixth group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-sixth group of respondents (100%)
27. The twenty-seventh group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-seventh group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-seventh group of respondents (100%)
28. The twenty-eighth group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-eighth group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-eighth group of respondents (100%)
29. The twenty-ninth group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-ninth group of respondents (100%)	The twenty-ninth group of respondents (100%)
30. The thirtieth group of respondents (100%)	The thirtieth group of respondents (100%)	The thirtieth group of respondents (100%)

Teiser: Were many illustrations hand printed? Did you do any hand printing?

Dean: No, I didn't, but Ed printed many by hand.

Teiser: Did you ever have anything to do with the design of title pages?

Dean: No. I often added a decoration to their typography.

Teiser: Did they design the typography and just indicate the place where the art work was to go? How did they develop a title pages with art work on it?

Dean: Oh, I think sometimes it would work one way and sometimes the other. If I had a drawing in mind they would design to go with it. I think in most cases Ed or Bob would do the typography and then I would make a design or cut to fit the type.

Teiser: What was the basis on which you worked with them?

Dean: In the beginning I was employed on a free-lance basis. For some years I worked in my studio on Jackson Street. Of course when they were on Commercial it was very handy, going back and forth.

But as I said, in the early days it was often a case of their just needing an initial for a book or a special thing of some sort. Sometimes it was a matter of designing an ornament or an initial and then engraving it in wood. Often something for a single

Dean: copy. Various organizations would often want a single copy for some special occasion: "Therefore be it resolved..." And you'd wind up doing something on handmade paper. Illuminated with an initial in gold.

Teiser: Did you ever do any calligraphy?

Dean: In a way. I made a series of brush and ink initials for, I think, something to do with Japanese prints.

Teiser: Did you do any typesetting?

Dean: Yes, they let me try it once, but only once. I did a little bit of everything. I worked in the bindery. So did Sherwood Grover. When things had to be done, why everyone pitched in and did them. When time was running short everyone worked on what needed doing at the moment, and everything else stopped.

Teiser: Were you still an occasional worker at that time?

Dean: Well, I worked for a while on a basis of three days a week.

Teiser: Perhaps you can tell something of Bob's contribution to the press.

Dean: Well, of course, he did a tremendous amount of the typesetting, and a great deal of design. In many cases he was solely responsible for the design. I

Dean: was always much more at ease with Bob than I was with Ed. If I wanted some help, I automatically turned to Bob. I knew Bob and Jane better than I knew Ed and Marjorie.

Teiser: What part in the enterprise was played by Ed's wife, Marjorie? She was there some of the time, was she not?

Dean: Not often. The times I saw her she was generally helping with sewing or binding.

Bob would always check things ... in other words he would see that certain things were done, where Ed might be so involved in another aspect of the job that he might have overlooked them. For instance in things like proofreading... Bob seemed to be more concerned about controlling things.

Of course, another side of Ed was his interest in collecting and also in repairing and restoring. I got to see quite a bit of that. Because when he'd get a painting from some scout that was in bad shape and needed work and I wasn't too busy, he'd have me work on it. Restore it. I was appalled at his ruthlessness, his methods. I've seen him take things that could well have been quite valuable, such as an old print, and put it in the bathtub and pour some

Dean: Clorox on it in the hopes of getting some spots out of it. It seemed like a terrific gamble to me, the way he treated some of the things.

Teiser: Did they come out well more often than not?

Dean: I think they did.

In addition to being a collector and horse-trader, he was an innovator. He would try anything. At times I think he even tried anything on the Japanese prints. But as a rule it worked out. Ed would also work on cuts for a book. He cut many of the color plates for his Japanese print books. I can remember working on one book that had some rather elaborate illustrations; I don't recall whether it wound up being late or what, but Ed finished it by designing something for the cover and then cutting the linoleum plates for it too. To me it looked a bit shocking but it was quite all right. Probably very unusual. He was a very determined man. He was very capable of doing something if he wanted it done immediately.

Teiser: It seems that there was a lot of originality in the Grabhorn Press.

Dean: Extreme originality many times. And always in one way or another, and it applied to all phases of the

Dean: work. It occurred in the bindery, and it occurred at the press. And I think conventional printers would have been appalled. Every time you walked in there, something unusual was going on; it was so unorthodox. It's just that Ed was sufficiently sure of himself to know whether he could try something and get away with it. And he had the time to do it, or he would take the time. It was often a money saver. Not that he was always concerned about money, but it would save the time of going down town and having someone do something for him.

One of the things I recall as being very original -- a time when he was doing the Japanese prints -- was the job of reproducing one with a mica background. The Japanese did use a mica dust. Well, Ed sent to Japan and got some mica dust and then proceeded to dust the sheets there in the shop. So this stuff was flying in the air, and nobody could do anything until the run was finished. I think the place could have been on fire and Ed would have kept doing it. Bob was in it too.

Teiser: Can you say that the original results they obtained were due more to Ed than Bob?

Dean: With art work, yes; I think Ed was more creative in

Dean: this respect. Bob seldom was confronted with the materials and methods side of it other than to voice his opinion or thoughts. But Ed would be the one who in the end said what was going to be used and how it was going to be handled. Especially in regard to what was to be printed.

Teiser: Were you aware that Bob was an employee rather than a partner?

Dean: No, except that it might have been gathered from the fact that Ed was older, was more outgoing and was in the habit of ordering others to do things.

ILLUSTRATIONS, THE PHYSIOLOGUS AND OTHER PRINTING

Teiser: Did you do work for others at the same time you were working for the Grabhorns?

Dean: Yes. One of the first books I did was to make some illustrations for a book my aunt wrote. That was in 1936. It was called For Keeps. It was a children's book.

Teiser: What was her name?

Dean: Gertrude E. Mallette. I made linoleum cuts based on the text, and I designed the jacket for it.

I did illustrations for Doubleday's 920 O'Farrell, by Harriet Levy, San Francisco Is Your Home for Stanford [University Press]. Then the Essays of Montaigne for the Allens in 1948. Also cuts for Oscar Lewis's The Lost Years -- and others.

Teiser: Was the Montaigne your first work with the Allens?

Dean: No, I did small things for them. First a wood engraving of the entrance to the old home in Larkspur. Later small things for some of their early books such as the Patrick Breen Diary. Across the Plains was a bigger job.

Teiser: How did you come to meet them?

Dean: I met Lew Allen through Ray Boynton before I knew the Grabhorns. The Physiologus -- Lew was responsible

Dean: for my doing that. He was a close friend of Francis Carmody's. Professor Carmody had done a translation of an early bestiary and had given it to Lew for a book. Lew was very interested, but its being in so many parts, it would require a lot more art work than they wanted to get into. In other words, they would have to pay someone to make a great many cuts. So Lew asked me if I wouldn't like to print a book. I said I would like to but that I knew little about typesetting and less about printing. He said, "You could do it. I've got a marvellous subject, and it's quite possible that Harold Seeger will sell you some of the John Henry Nash type that he had." That was my first type. And through Lew I learned about the Stevens-Nelson Paper Co. in New York and started corresponding with them about fine papers.

Teiser: I've heard the binding described as remarkable.

Dean: Well, it was somewhat unusual in that it had an all-over pattern from a linoleum block based on the illustrations. I was fortunate to find Invicta parchment, a very fascinating translucent material, and in experimenting with it I found that impressions from the block could be seen on the reverse side. The printed side of the parchment was pasted to the

Dean: binding boards and the pattern showing through gave a soft shadow effect. This was good as the design was too active for the book, I thought. The book was filled with linoleum cuts, all hand colored, and it was all but overdone inside, and I didn't want to have the thing too bold on the outside.

Teiser: Who did the coloring?

Dean: My wife* did most of the hand coloring, and she selected the colors.

Teiser: Why did you choose to hand-color them instead of using the press technique you described?

Dean: The cuts were too small for that particular technique. It would have required an individual cut for each color in each illustration. There were fifty illustrations, and each illustration had three or four colors, so it would have required a large number of individual color cuts. While I did make individual color cuts for initials, I didn't feel I could spend the time to do it for the illustrations. And my wife could help -- she could be doing that -- as pages were finished she could start coloring them. And, of course, hand-coloring is far more attractive and

* Vivien N. Dean.

Dean: unusual. The transparent watercolors add a great deal. It's possible to get many variations with them. Printing is pretty consistent in appearance, and hand coloring does vary from one to the other. We didn't try to vary them -- it's unavoidable.

Teiser: How in the world were you able to finance that kind of a job?

Dean: Well, I've had marvellous friends all along. I made some trial pages and showed them to the Book Club of California. They were most interested and were willing to give me a check for materials so I could get started.

Teiser: How long did it take you to produce that, and when was it completed?

Dean: Along with other jobs, it was nearly two years before being finished as the Christmas book for 1953.

Teiser: When did you last work regularly with the Grabhorn Press?

Dean: The big break came at the time of the war. 1941. I was working with the Grabhorns, and when the war started I abandoned everything for shipyard work.

Teiser: What kind of war work did you do?

Dean: I started at the Kaiser yards over in Richmond, after a very disappointing experience. Hopefully I was

Dean: going to work in a small wooden [shipyard] in the city. The owner told me to join the union and get my tools together. After sitting around the union hall for a number of days and being told that they, not I, would say where I was to work, I was sent to Richmond. I was doing insulation work with glass wool and hating it. Then I investigated a small shipyard in Sausalito. A friend who was working there talked to the owners, Madden and Lewis, who were building wooden boats for the British Navy, and I got permission to transfer. So after I think about three months in Richmond I went to work in Sausalito and it was fascinating. I went through the whole business, you know, all parts of it, from the keel to painting designation numbers on the finished ships.

About that time Ralph Stackpole decided to move from the City to a ranch near Cloverdale, and he brought us over to look at his Fairfax home, and we bought that. So we moved there and all during the war I commuted from Fairfax to Sausalito. Three and a half years of boat building.

After the war it was very difficult to find work. The Grabhorns didn't have much for me to do,

Dean: and I remember I went to work for the Fairfax Post Office, and delivered mail for a while. There were window display jobs for Marin County stores and other free-lance work. I went back to the Grabhorn Press on a three-days-a-week basis for a while and made the "From Gutenberg to Grabhorn"* cuts for Mackenzie & Harris. Then I met Jim [James E.] Beard, from St. Helena. This was in 1949. He was doing printing for the wineries, Charles Krug, Inglenook, and others, and wanted me to do some art work for Krug. I made woodcuts for their folder, "The Man Who Struck Gold," and that opened up a whole new field of work.

Teiser: And advertising booklets? Like the one for Wente Brothers winery?

Dean: Yes, I did that for Alfred Kennedy's wife, who had a little advertising agency. She had the Wente account. The winery work was very interesting and it was responsible for my meeting many new fine friends.

Then I taught at the California School of Fine Arts for a while.

*A series of advertisements later reprinted.

Teiser: What did you teach?

Dean: I taught graphic arts, a course in typography and one in silk screen printing. In the adult education program at the Marin Junior College, I taught lithography on stone, et cetera. At the art school [California School of Fine Arts] I had the first class in typography. We didn't have much to work with. But we had an interesting group of people who learned a lot by looking at printed work and type specimens and visiting printing shops and places like Mackenzie & Harris.

Teiser: That was before Adrian Wilson taught there?

Dean: Yes. Adrian took over after I left.

Teiser: By then you had become interested in type per se?

Dean: Yes. That was after the Physiologus, and I had worked on various printing jobs and had acquired more type faces.

Teiser: Have you used silk screen much in connection with your other printing?

Dean: I've made silk screen prints, a few, and I've used it in some of the advertising for wineries, principally because I knew how to do it, could make the equipment, and was interested in trying.

One job was a very large card for Krug. It

Dean: was based on the device I made for the house organ, "Bottles and Bins", which they later copyrighted for their trademark. I was charging \$2 an hour for my work there.

Teiser: That's the one Krug still uses on its "Bottles and Bins? "

Dean: Yes, it's the design with the man and the bins on a wine grape leaf.

Teiser: What other work have you done for wineries? This rather ties in with another interview series we're doing on the wine industry.

Dean: Various labels, through Jim Beard.*

I did quite a bit of work for Taylor & Taylor and McCann-Erickson at that time. I did some books for Taylor & Taylor. And both Jim [James W.] Elliott and Bob [Robert W.] Washbush were a great help to me in many ways.

Teiser: What work did you do for Taylor & Taylor?

Dean: Well, the main one was the Pioneer Society book, This Sudden Empire -- wood engravings in color. That was an A.I.G.A.** "fifty best books." I made

*See also pages 32, 37, 40 and 50.

**American Institute of Graphic Arts.

Dean: cuts for The House in Mallorca. There was a P.G.& E. booklet. And I did engravings for the Standard Oil Bulletin. Also engravings in color for the Blake, Moffitt & Towne book, Deep Roots.

Teiser: You didn't do any work for Taylor & Taylor while the Taylors were still there, did you?

Dean: No. I used to visit the shop as a messenger from the California School of Fine Arts. It was always a great pleasure. I said I was unfamiliar with printing, but I used to like to go down to Taylor & Taylor with copy or to pick something up, for the [art school] bulletin.

Teiser: You met the Taylors then?

Dean: No. My association was with Jim Elliot and Bob Washbush.

Teiser: You did some work for Mackenzie & Harris?

Dean: "From Gutenberg to Grabhorn." Later, I designed a new trade mark for them, and their letterhead and shipping label.

Teiser: Have you done many other trade marks?

Dean: A few.

Teiser: Haven't you done a good deal for the school of religion. . .

Dean: Oh, I've worked many years for the San Francisco

Dean: Theological Seminary.

Teiser: What have you done for them?

Dean: All of their fine printing and designing, their catalogue and their announcements, et cetera.

They had a program called "The Cultural Events Series," a concert series. I did the music programs for that.

Al [Albert] Sperisen was responsible for my meeting Mr. John Little, who was a former advertising man and provost of the Seminary at that time. He was very enthusiastic about my work and made the association a very pleasant one.

Teiser: You mentioned concert programs. . .

Dean: Cultural activities of various kinds.

Teiser: Actual programs?

Dean: Actual programs -- many with woodcuts in color.

Teiser: Is that an interesting kind of work to do?

Dean: Very interesting. It was usually creative.

Teiser: It seems to me there's been some interesting program printing here, with Adrian Wilson, Lawton Kennedy, you, and -- did the Grabhorns do any?

Dean: I don't recall any, but I'm sure they must have.

They did some of everything, of course, Often very lavish things, such as food and wine brochures.

Dean: But these [Theological Seminary] programs were fun because I could do what I wanted to do.

And then I've done a series of over forty menus and many brochures for a doctors' group. They have fabulous dinners with fabulous wines, and always at interesting places with interesting speakers. I design the menus with art to fit the occasion and season, if possible.

Back to the wineries, I worked with Bob [Grabhorn] on Almaden labels. Bob was doing the typography for them, and he asked me to make engravings for them. The designs were based on previous art. Then I did the Heitz [wine] label.

Bob Mondavi has established a new and very impressive winery at Oakville. I have made a wood engraving to go with Jim Beard's typography for the label. And I've made several other wood engravings for a little booklet about the winery.

And I did the Inglenook labels, the ones they used when it was an estate winery. It is now owned by United Vintners.

Teiser: The new one rather echoes yours, doesn't it?

Dean: Well, they continue to use my original art of the winery building. But Heitz, Mondavi and the others

Dean: wanted something a little different, so the wood engravings.

Teiser: Back to books, you did work for Dawson's in Los Angeles?

Dean: The Early California Travel series, yes. I did two or three of those. I printed the books, and bound them.

Teiser: Could we go over in some detail the book work that you have done on your own in recent years? We're nearing the end of this tape. Perhaps we could do that in another session.

Dean: Fine. I'll make some notes.

I've done several private things for Schaffner, Joseph Halle Schaffner.



Mallette Dean in his shop.
1970

MAKING BOOKS

Dean: We were talking about the Physiologus and the binding paper. This is one of the proofs that wasn't used.

Teiser: Is that parchment?

Dean: It's a vegetable parchment. But it's a very fine quality paper. [Shows block.]

Teiser: The block is perfectly beautiful in itself.

Dean: It [the paper] was used with the printed surface pasted to the boards so that the design was seen as a shadow effect through the translucent parchment paper.

Teiser: Did you do the binding of the Physiologus yourselves, you and your wife?

Dean: Yes.

Teiser: You do hand binding, hand sewing and everything?

Dean: Some. As a rule we have the books machine sewn because of the time involved. Hand sewing is a very time-consuming thing. Peter Fahey, Stella Patri, and Eleanor Hesthal have helped us. Jane Grabhorn was of great help with Physiologus and has helped me with other books. She has always been most encouraging.

Teiser: This is the cut for the Moraga Hills print. Again,

Teiser: what a perfectly beautiful block.

Dean: Those are the two extremes under the broad term of block printing. One [that for the Physiologus] is of linoleum, which is really quite bold and crude, and the other a wood engraving, which is the finest possible, or approaches the finest etching in that you can use a very fine tool and get an extremely fine line. And, of course, they are often printed intaglio, too. If it's a straight line design it can be printed like an etching or copper engraving.

Teiser: Do you do this fine kind of work any more?

Dean: Yes, for bookplates, illustrations, wine labels and so forth.

Teiser: I was looking at the Heitz wine label yesterday.

Dean: That's crude again.

Teiser: What wine labels are done in this fine line?

Dean: The last label I did for Robert Mondavi is a wood engraving, and also one of the Almaden labels is a wood engraving; a second is linoleum.

Teiser: You were speaking of the fact that Ed Grabhorn did a lot of things on his own just because he wanted to have control and keep time in his own hands. But you have, of course, even more facilities within your

Teiser: own self, haven't you, than he, because you can handle. . .

Dean: Perhaps.

Teiser: . . . more aspects of the work. Coming at it from quite a different approach than he did.

Dean: Well, Ed was definitely interested in all aspects of printing. The typographical side of it and the illustrations or decorations which he used with it. But he carried his creative ability on into the art work, especially in the reproduction of it, and he often would interpret it in his own way and he often would control the effect by his ability and his craftsmanship in the printing process.

Teiser: Are you more likely to create the effect in the original (as in the block) and not control it in the printing?

Dean: No, I have no idea what it's going to look like before it's printed, as a rule. Unless it's a straight black and white, which is a faithful reproduction of the original engraving or cut. But if it goes into color work there's so many, many ways of doing it that I only decide after experimenting with the printing. Flash ideas or experiments are often responsible for the final results.

Teiser: So that you too then control in the reproduction process.

Dean: Oh, yes, surely. And I think it stems from the interest in painting, which is always spontaneous and created as you progress, as you go along. It isn't always preconceived. The restrictions of some of the graphic arts mediums cause things to be pretty carefully worked out and then faithfully reproduced as originally visualized; in, oh, such things as straight copper or wood engraving -- they have very decided limitations. You can't be too free with them. In wood cutting or linoleum you are more likely to be free in that the material is softer, it has less limitations and you can work faster; therefore if you get a sudden idea to try something you automatically just go ahead and chop it out without having to keep that rigid control that's necessary on metal or end grain boxwood.*

Teiser: Then do you just take it directly to the press and pull a proof?

Dean: Oh, I often pull a proof at stages. In other words, when I think it has developed to a point where I

*See also pages 51-52.

Dean: would like to see what I have I'll take a proof and then develop it from that. If you have the proof to look at you can see what you've done to that point.

Teiser: You do the same thing in setting type? How do you approach that?

Dean: Well, it depends on what you're concerned with. If you're concerned with an illustration then that's always in the back of your mind. The particular page of typography that's to go with the cut. If it's an initial, that's another thing again, because you have to allow for the space for the initial and you want it to be in harmony with the page. It has to fit with the line that the initial starts. Sometimes it's a simple initial of certain measure, which is nothing more than a large piece of type. Then again it can be a decorative thing, such as was the case in the De Soto book* of the Grabhorns. Many of the initials went across the page or right up and down part of the page. And at times the initial was designed and the type fitted to it; in fact in most cases I think the type was fitted to the initial. And in the Physiologus, the first book I did, I used

*The Discovery of Florida.

Dean: initials to get around typographical problems. In other words, if you had lines that didn't break right or certain paragraph arrangements or the length of a particular part, many of which were small, and perhaps would end up with two or three lines on the next page, you could drive it out and add decoration in the form of a decorative initial. Of course, that would add five or six lines to the text in doing it. [Laughter]

Teiser: Of course this is something that Ed Grabhorn did not have precisely in his grasp.

Dean: Ed surely has faced all of the problems and surely has been capable of solving all of them.

Teiser: This is 'way at the other end of what Adrian Wilson, for instance, now does, designing on paper and. . .

Dean: Well, Adrian seems to have the thing all done before he starts. And I've never done that. I start in and do it over many times. I've seldom been successful on the first attempt, but it's fun trying things, and I often will set a page of type with different measure and different leading just because I'm unsure and I can't tell until I see it what I think is best.

Teiser: This is the traditional printer's way really, isn't it, to create. . .

Dean: Well, Ed certainly would often work on the stone and be able to tell from the type on the stone whether it was right or not. I don't know whether Bob did that as often or not. But I have never worked that way.

Teiser: I guess the stories are true about the Grabhorns pulling proofs of many versions of a title page before deciding on one. Did that happen as often as it's said to have happened?

Dean: I wasn't too aware of it, because, as I said before, I didn't get into the typesetting part of the shop and I, as a rule, was involved with other problems.

Teiser: When you did work for them, did you work in your own studio or in their shop?

Dean: For the most part I worked in my own studio, but there were times when I worked, as I said, three days a week in the shop and that was so during the printing of the De Soto, The Discovery of Florida; when I was working on Japanese prints I worked full-time in the shop for a while.

POST-WAR FREE-LANCING

Teiser: Let me get back to the Japanese prints and get one point. You ceased working on them after the first volume of Japanese prints?

Dean: Oh, I worked on the second a time or two when Ed needed a little extra help. But by then I was busy with my own work and didn't want to spend too much time in the shop.

Teiser: How did you decide to get on with your own work? Was it a sudden decision, or how did it come about?

Dean: Well, a number of reasons, I guess. I certainly had other interests. I was very interested in going on with painting, which incidentally stopped about the time I went to the Grabhorns, and I was certainly interested in prints. I had been doing lots of prints and exhibiting, but that also ceased for the most part. I think the war was the big interruption because it meant changing everything. We not only gave up the studio, we gave up the type of work we were doing, we moved, and just everything was disrupted. And of course after the war we were faced with an entirely different problem, the problem of readjusting, trying to find work and

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Let us first look at the question of the
the value of the constant c in the first
equation.

Let us assume that the value of c is
different from zero. Then the first
equation can be written in the form
$$y'' + p(x)y' + q(x)y = c$$

where $p(x)$ and $q(x)$ are functions of x .

Let us now assume that $c = 0$.

Then the first equation can be written in the form

$$y'' + p(x)y' + q(x)y = 0$$

where $p(x)$ and $q(x)$ are functions of x .

Let us now assume that $c \neq 0$.

Then the first equation can be written in the form

$$y'' + p(x)y' + q(x)y = c$$

where $p(x)$ and $q(x)$ are functions of x .

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Let us now assume that $c = 0$.

Dean: of earning a living. And while in a way it was a little bit like the '29 and '30 years where you were faced with no work, it was quite different in that you had assumed responsibilities. I mean, marriage and children and all make the picture quite different. So we couldn't be quite as free about it as we were earlier. But it did entail free-lancing again. I didn't want to commute regularly. I didn't want to go to the City, having seen how wonderful it was to live in Marin. So I started doing all sorts of odd jobs. I did quite a bit of window decorating, a little bit of cabinet work for some of the stores, and then, as I say, I went to work with the post office for quite a while. And then I got teaching jobs, both in San Francisco and over in Kentfield.

Teiser: Were you doing any printing during this period?

Dean: I think I had been doing some Christmas card work and odd things, but there wasn't much of it.

Teiser: You had had a press for some time?

Dean: Yes. I had the press in San Francisco and we stored it there in a friend's basement during the war.

Teiser: You said you had a Colt's Armory?

Dean: Yes, I still have it.

Teiser: Where did you get it?

Dean: I bought it from some shop down on Sansome. I don't remember where it came from. But I can remember a draying company bringing it up to 402 Jackson and hoisting it to a third-story window for about \$25. [Laughter] I think I paid that to have them give me an estimate on moving it to Marin.

Teiser: Then did you buy type at the same time?

Dean: No. It was some time afterwards I bought my first type.

Teiser: So you really bought the press to work on illustrations mainly?

Dean: Christmas cards and that sort of thing.

Teiser: And if there were words involved, would you cut them in a block?

Dean: Yes, very often, and I can remember Bob giving me some type at times for small runs.

Well, back to the press. Two of us moved it out of the studio; a shipyard friend of mine went over with me on a Sunday. We borrowed a geared winch and got the thing all the way downstairs and into a truck. We moved it to a friend's house and it stayed there until after the war when we moved it to Fairfax. That's the one I'm using now.

Teiser: Are you fairly mechanical? Do you know how to keep

Teiser: it running?

Dean: Yes. I enjoy that side of it.

Teiser: Bob Grabhorn said with what I thought was regret that he had never really learned to run a press. And I always thought that printers thought that typesetting was much more interesting.

Dean: Oh, I think it's just as well that Bob never learned to run the press because we would have lost a lot of fine printing, fine composition. Most anyone can run a press. There's only one Robert Grabhorn when it comes to typography, type composition, the design of it, and the fantastic knowledge of all of it. Which is, after all, the creative part of it.

Teiser: Yes, that was what I assumed.

Dean: Oh, I'm not a mechanic, certainly, but I've enjoyed working with automobiles or machinery and haven't had any major catastrophes.

Teiser: What year did you take your press over to Marin, to Fairfax?

Dean: Gee, I don't remember. Let's see, the war ended in '45 -- it was about '46, I think, we brought it over. And the Physiologus was the first major project I started on.

Teiser: And when did you start on that?

Dean: The Physiologus was ... it's down here somewhere,
I don't remember these book dates ... it was 1951.

Teiser: You said you worked on it over a year?

Dean: Nearly two years along with other jobs. I think
people have mentioned I worked on it a year, but it
was longer.

Teiser: Were you doing wine label work at the same time
then?

Dean: No. That started in '49 when I met James E. Beard
who at the time had his own printing shop and was
doing a great deal of printing for the wine industry,
labels and so forth.

Teiser: Before you met him, though, what work had you done
there on your press?

Dean: Oh, such things as greeting cards mostly or book
plates; some letterhads, business cards, announce-
ments -- small jobs.

Teiser: More individual?

Dean: Yes. No commercial or job work at all.

Teiser: And no other books?

Dean: No.

Teiser: After the first book was published, did that bring
you then a kind of notice that brought you other work?

Dean: I'm certain it did, because it was fairly well received
at the Book Club [and] because others followed.

THEMES IN MY POEMS, YO SEMITE AND AH SIN

Dean: The next one was the Robinson Jeffers book, Themes in My Poems.

Teiser: You've described the Physiologus. What about the Robinson Jeffers?

Dean: It was quite different in that the decorations were done on plank grain wood. They were woodcuts.

Teiser: Plank grain?

Dean: Plank grain. In other words, it's like a common piece of board rather than a slice off of the end of the log, which is the end grain.

Teiser: Do you use the grain as part of the design when you use plank grain?

Dean: You can, if the grain is such that it shows. I've often done that. And of course there are many woods used for woodcuts that are very tight and the grain doesn't show up. But it again controls the results to some extent in that what I call "restriction" is quite different than it is on end grain wood. The texture is uniform on end grain and the tool can go in any direction without any particular force being exerted against it. The principal restriction in the end grain boxwood is that it is so hard. It's very hard. A woodcut is done in softer wood. So it's

Dean: easier to cut but you have some conflict with the grain which is inclined to tear and the tool is liable to get into it ... therefore a knife is often used rather than a gouge.

Teiser: How would you choose then?

Dean: The result is always quite different. It depends on the nature of the wood and what you want to do.

Teiser: And what was it you wanted to do in the Jeffers book?

Dean: For one thing the designs were fairly abstract, because Jeffers was talking about the themes that he used in his writing. I didn't want to make specific illustrations, things that pertained to anything in particular; I wanted it to be as abstract as I could. Not that they aren't representational to some degree, but they are more than that.

Teiser: Did you choose that work to make a book out of, or did The Book Club?

Dean: The Book Club gave me the material and I designed it and illustrated it.

Teiser: They chose the subject then.

Dean: Yes. That's usually the case, I think. The Physiologus was an exception. I presented the text with sample pages of type and illustrations and they accepted it. I was given the text for the other books.

Teiser: But you were given a free hand to make illustrations as you wanted?

Dean: Yes.

Teiser: Did you have to present pages as you went along then?

Dean: No. It's one of the wonderful things about the Club. They seem to have faith in the people they give books to and they are free to do as they please. It's a pretty nice way to work.

Teiser: The Robinson Jeffers book, how is it divided between illustration and text?

Dean: Oh, there aren't many illustrations.

Teiser: I see. So it was more a typographical book than a . . .

Dean: Well, it has more illustrations than some things I've done, I think. The text was divided between his explanation and examples of his work, which he used too to illustrate his various "themes."

Teiser: What type did you use?

Dean: There I used the Elzivir again, the same type I had used on the Physiologus.

Teiser: Have you other types?

Dean: Yes. I've used Centaur a great deal for books and then I've also had Mackenzie & Harris set type, and I have other faces. I have Van Dijck, which we used a lot.

(1) The first thing I noticed when I stepped out of the car was
 the smell of the sea. It was a fresh, salty breeze that
 carried with it the promise of a new day.
 The sun was just beginning to rise, painting the sky in
 soft, golden hues. The water was calm, reflecting the
 light of the dawn. I took a deep breath, feeling the
 cool air fill my lungs. It was a moment of pure
 tranquility, a moment where time seemed to stand still.
 I walked along the shore, my feet sinking into the
 soft sand. The waves were gentle, lapping at the shore
 with a soothing rhythm. I could hear the distant
 chirping of birds, their voices adding to the peaceful
 symphony of nature. The world felt so vast and yet so
 intimate, as if I had found a secret place just for me.
 The sun had risen higher now, and the sky was a
 brilliant blue. The water was a deep, rich blue, and
 the sand was a warm, golden yellow. I felt a sense of
 wonder and awe, as if I had discovered a hidden world.
 The air was warm and inviting, and the light was
 perfect. It was a beautiful morning, and I was
 lucky to be here. I took another deep breath, feeling
 the sun on my face and the sea in my soul. It was
 a moment of pure joy, a moment where I felt truly
 alive. The world was so beautiful, and I was so
 grateful to be here. I took one last look at the sea,
 and then I turned and walked back to the car. The
 journey home was peaceful, and I felt a sense of
 calm and contentment. The sea was still in my
 mind, and the sun was still in my heart. It was a
 beautiful day, and I was lucky to have it.

Teiser: What proportion of your work is hand set as compared to machine set?

Dean: Oh, I guess half of it probably, because most of the privately printed books I have done have been hand set.

Teiser: What of the binding of the Jeffers book?

Dean: The binding paper I designed and made the cut for, and printed it. It was abstract too, and was done in a method I had sort of stumbled on or thought about and decided to try, and it turned out it was usable. So I used it.

Teiser: What was it?

Dean: Instead of making a cut from wood or linoleum, I made it of plaster. I incised the design in wet plaster and then, when dry, surfaced it to type-high.

Teiser: My word! When you speak of surfacing it to type-high you mean you've sanded the back or something?

Dean: No, I put the wet plaster on a piece of plywood that together approximated a type-high block. But then, of course, anything being done that crudely would have to be trued up to a considerable extent before you could print with it.

Teiser: I'm surprised that plaster would hold up in a press.

Dean: Well, there again it's a matter of picking the right plaster and, I guess, putting it on the board properly [laughter] and then being sure you don't break it. And be careful in printing too, by all sorts of means. The amount of impression used and the type of packing; and you can use a rubber blanket, if you want, under the tympan paper so that there's a very resilient cushion there. That certainly wouldn't be suitable for type, but for certain types of blocks it's a definite advantage.

Teiser: I meant to borrow to look at again the book you printed that was written by Caroline LeConte.* Do you customarily bite into the paper as heavily as the Grabhorns?

Dean: I would like to. I don't think I've ever acquired the courage they have, but I'm still trying. I've damaged type on occasion, but I don't think I'm about to mash very much. [Laughter] No, the LeConte book I think was one of the nicest I've done, perhaps because I didn't illustrate it. [Laughter]

Teiser: She did, didn't she?

Dean: Yes, but I had a lot of fun printing her drawings,

*LeConte, Carrie E., Yo Semite, San Francisco: The Book Club of California, 1964.

Dean: and I added color to most of them. Not to the point of changing them too much, I hope, or altering them. But it did make the book a little gayer, I think.

Teiser: It's a delightful book.

Dean: Well, I'm of course very, very interested in that sort of material. I mean, I love the out-of-doors and camping and all. And then it was occurring at that nice time in history, and starting in Berkeley and going to such a wonderful place as Yosemite and having all these quaint drawings to work with. It was a very pleasant job.

Teiser: Did you have to do any correction in the drawings? Did they come out clearly?

Dean: No, for the most part they reproduced quite well. I used parts of some rather than the complete drawing, where it was appropriate. Where I needed a little wagon or the horses and the driver. Or I remember on the title page I used only the picture of the two girls, and I think I eliminated most of the landscape. But that's part of the business of designing a book, to control the appearance of it.

Teiser: Did you use any special techniques on that?

Dean: No, I don't think so, except that I . . . Of course thinking of Ah Sin where I made my own type

Dean: ornaments out of some old type.

Teiser: You did what?

Dean: I made my own type ornaments. I took some heavy old Gothic type -- I remember from a capital "J" I engraved a pistol for the running head ornaments for Ah Sin. The pistol was quite a significant part of the play.

Teiser: That is the kind of ingenuity that so few people have the ability to carry through. If they thought of it they couldn't do it.

Dean: Well, it's a little different than making a woodcut for a tailpiece or an initial; or, you know, it's just that the scale of the problem and the mechanics of it are a little different. It would be very difficult to try and shape a tiny little piece of the boxwood and engrave it, but it could be done. But I didn't do it because I had metal that was reasonably close to what I wanted to start with. And of course it's much more substantial. It's the same as the type and can be composed the same way, also. It's the sort of thing that you can't run down to Mackenzie & Harris and say, "Please cast a 24-point pistol for me," so you have to do it yourself. [Laughter]

MORE BOOK ILLUSTRATIONS

Dean: Well, after the Physiologus I went on working for other printers, it seems. I did quite a bit, of course, for Lew Allen and Dorothy. After the Physiologus were the two books for Lew Allen, Roughing It in California by Mark Twain and the Private Journals of Stendhal. Roughing It was illustrated with rather crude bold linoleum cuts again, and the Stendhal journals had, I remember, pen and ink drawings based on old designs. Then there was the wood engraving job for the American Trust Company in San Francisco, the Street Names.

Teiser: It seems to me that's reminiscent of the Annals of San Francisco a bit. Is it?

Dean: Quite similar. Or do you mean This Sudden Empire?

Teiser: Well, that too.

Dean: Very similar to that. This Sudden Empire was certainly one of my most serious jobs of wood engraving. I had to dig up the scrap for most of that.

Teiser: They have reprinted and reprinted that little Street Names booklet.

Dean: Probably. I hope they did it better than the first edition. I did wood engraved Christmas cards for

Dean: the American Trust Company too. But those were very well reproduced because they had Charles [R.] Wood do it. He's a master and he took great pains to follow the color proofs that I gave him. I think the wood engravings for Street Names were printed from electros, and they weren't too successful nor too faithful the first time. They looked a little rough. They weren't as clean as they should have been.

The next year came Deep Roots. Wood engravings for the history of Blake, Moffitt & Towne, the Taylor & Taylor book.

Teiser: Did you do that elaborate tree?

Dean: Yes. The tree is linoleum, and the other cuts are wood engraving. But I did the tree quite large and then set the type and pasted the names into the places.

Teiser: Yes, here it is. [Looking at Deep Roots.] Did you think that it was reproduced well.

Dean: The tree yes. The cuts aren't too awfully well done, but they are well enough done. The only way to tell would be to get a set of proofs, which I made before the block was used to any extent, and then compare it with illustrations in the book. But

Dean: this is very clean.

Teiser: This is page 25, a cut of a man at a foot-powered press. Did you work this one up?

Dean: No, you have to get a picture of the press to be sure what it looks like.

Teiser: Was the book's illustration your idea?

Dean: To some extent, yes. Most of it. There are a couple of places in the book where I had to follow specific things, such as that photograph of early equipment here [page 91]. I think I had an early photograph to work from. Where it shows the horse-drawn delivery truck and then the modern truck.

Then '56, I guess, was the first book I did for Glen Dawson, Adventures in California. That was the little story of the Russians on the Farallone Islands. It had wood engravings, color wood engravings.

Teiser: When you speak of colored wood engravings, you mean several different color blocks?

Dean: Yes, a wood engraved block for each color.

Teiser: In Deep Roots the engravings are in black and there tint blocks are used, is that right?

Dean: The tints are from wood engravings too, as in This Sudden Empire. There was another book for the Allens

Dean: in '56, The Noble Knight Paris. I made wood engravings for it.

Teiser: This is This Sudden Empire. Did you do the illustrations on the cover?

Dean: Yes, it's a wood engraving repeated for a pattern. Which I have done many times. I did similar things when I was at the Grabhorn Press.

Teiser: This was one of the American Institute of Graphic Arts "Fifty Books" of that year. Have other of your books made it?

Dean: No. I've never submitted a book for that show.

Teiser: Have other books that you've worked on, I mean?

Dean: Yes, the Grabhorn Wah-To-Yah* was. That was one of the first books I ever illustrated. It's one of Bob's favorite books. It's filled with extremely crude linoleum cuts. Cruder than usual. [Laughter]

Teiser: Done on purpose?

Dean: No, because I couldn't do better. To Ed's great satisfaction, undoubtedly. [Laughter]

*1936.

THE SCHAFFNER BOOKS AND THE DUCHOW JOURNAL

Dean: In '58 I did the first book for Joseph Halle Schaffner. It turned into a very nice relationship.

Teiser: And he is in New York?

Dean: New York and Santa Barbara. "Hart, Schaffner and Marx" Schaffner. He likes fine printing and fine books and he likes to give books, and therefore he likes to have nice things done to commemorate things that are very close to him. And the first book I printed [for him] was an address given by a close friend at the memorial service when his mother died.

Teiser: Mr. Schaffner's mother?

Dean: Yes.

Teiser: How large an edition was that?

Dean: I don't remember how many were printed, something like 250, I think. 240.

Teiser: Do any of these go into libraries, his books?

Dean: Yes, some do. He's had requests for them. The Library of Congress has some. I think there are a couple at The Book Club, but I don't remember which ones, and I don't know that they kept the ones that did get there; but he did present a couple to the Club, I remember.

- Dean: Betty Downs was responsible for my meeting him. He was at the [Book] Club at the time he wanted to get this thing printed and was asking about various printers; she mentioned me and he came over to Fairfax to see me and gave me the job immediately. This was set in Centaur types and printed on dampened handmade paper and illustrated with wood engravings.
- Teiser: Gentle and Beloved Friend is the title. This is the one about his mother?
- Dean: Yes. And it's written by a very close friend, who has written some of the other things I have printed for him.*
- Teiser: That's a beautiful page.
- Dean: I made the wood engraved initials for it.
- Teiser: What style are those initials? Can you characterize them?
- Dean: Uncial.
- Teiser: What perfectly beautiful use of color too.
- Dean: It's simple. Red and black is perhaps the ideal combination.
- Teiser: Did you do the decoration in the numerals too?
- Dean: No, that's all typographical. The folios are a different face because I wanted them to be a bit decorative.

*John C. Weigel

Teiser: Was the whole thing in the one. . .

Dean: No, no. These are periods. . .

Teiser: The periods were added by you?

Dean: Yes, as ornament.

Teiser: How did you do that? Didn't you have to cut them?

Dean: Oh, no. It's just a matter of placing them. You've undoubtedly seen very elaborate designs made completely from typographical ornaments.

Teiser: Yes, but I didn't realize you could get them so close in as that.

Dean: Well, it's a matter of turning one upside down or laying one on its side, et cetera.

Teiser: Was this the first printing you had done on dampened paper?

Dean: Yes. Except for very limited work. I'd done prints on damp paper.

Teiser: So you have had experience with this.

Dean: Oh, yes. And I helped to some extent with damp printing in the shop, too.

Teiser: At the Grabhorn Press?

Dean: Yes.

Teiser: Ed Grabhorn indicated in his interview that one of the reasons he came to San Francisco was that the climate was good for printing on dampened paper.

Dean: Well, there's a lot to that. There's nothing more difficult for a printer to contend with than a very hot day when you're trying to print on dampened paper.

Teiser: Yes. The Allens mentioned this and the trouble they've had in their home in Marin. Do you encounter problems there?

Dean: At certain times of the year, yes. Even though my shop is under the house on the ground level with quite a bit of concrete. There are times when you keep the thing tightly closed, hoping to keep the heat out, keep the floor damp with water on the concrete. It's always a pleasure to be able to do it during rainy weather, because it's often desirable to keep a given run or a given sheet going over a period of more than one day, and of course keeping the proper dampness for two or three days is often a problem.

Teiser: Have you elaborate cabinets?

Dean: No, no. Lew Allen showed me a simple little device he made for keeping the paper damp. It's just a cloth covered wire frame that you put your paper in to keep it damp. And that's quite simple.

I think a critical part of damp paper printing

Dean: is the means by which the printer dampens the paper. That seems to be endless. I can remember Ed dipping sheets in a tub of water, you know, just literally dunking them and hanging them up until most of the water ran off and then piling them. And a sponge is a very common means of dampening, of course, which requires some control. You can't just have it very wet one time and quite dry the next. And I've tried spraying. But for the most part I've dampened with a sponge. But then there's the question, do you dampen every sheet or every other one? And how long do you leave it before you print it? And so on.

Teiser: If you dampen every other one, do you pack them together and let them. . .

Dean: It's one dry, one wet, one dry, one wet, and then with a weight, and then overnight it's absolutely uniform.

Teiser: Is that the way you usually do it?

Dean: Yes.

Teiser: What type of paper must you use, or do you use, when you print damp?

Dean: It should be an all rag paper, handmade all rag paper, because the others have a tendency to go to

Dean: pieces to some extent and also to wrinkle considerably.

Teiser: Is it difficult to get good papers for that type of printing?

Dean: It's becoming more difficult. You can still get them, but one of the principal problems now is the price. But there are mills abroad which in the past have produced fine and well known handmade papers that are disappearing. Both in Europe and Japan. There was one Japanese mill that made a beautiful Japanese vellum. It was made in three weights as I remember, which I've used over a number of years. For such things as bookplates, where you want to have a fine hard surface, for a fine wood engraving. And I remember the last time I wrote for some of that I was told it was no longer available. I found that the Japanese paper maker finally died and his son had no interest in paper making, and it was a family business, so it's gone. Probably gone forever too.

Teiser: Where do you now get. . .

Dean: You just have to resort to what's left, hope that you can find something suitable to print on. Fortunately there are many fine Japanese papers still available and some good all rag European papers.

Teiser: Have you ever tried paper making?

Dean: No.

Teiser: What other books then did you do for Mr. Schaffner?

Dean: The second one was the little book, Essays on Conyers Read,* a close friend who died. He was an Elizabethan scholar. [Showing the book.]

Teiser: What a beautiful decoration.

Dean: It's just a decoration. I couldn't think of anything more appropriate than just a nice tree. He seemed to be a very distinguished gentleman and a scholar and liked the out-of-doors. He was a fly fisherman and had a beautiful home and garden.

Gentle and Beloved Friend for Schaffner was done in '58. And then in '59 Lew Allen had started a book called The Duchow Journal. It came from the Bancroft [Library] and was a very interesting sea journal. He had laid the book out; he hadn't done any composition to speak of or any printing at all. I don't think he had purchased paper. But then again came the time when they were ready to take off for Europe and he said that he would like me to go ahead and do it. So I took what he had done. I think I had made little marginal illustrations for

* By William L. Langer and others.

Dean: it already, pen drawings. So from there I took it over, set the book by hand, printed and bound it and sold it.

Teiser: How many copies. . .

Dean: It was very successful and -- I've forgotten -- it could have been 250. I don't remember.

Teiser: How did you sell it? Through direct mail or. . .

Dean: An announcement, yes, to Book Club members and such. I think [it is] a very fine journal. And Dr. [George P.] Hammond wrote an introduction, which added a great deal to it. And it had a very interesting daguerreotype of the young author, together with his family. I was fortunate in having a very fine craftsman in the East Bay print it by a copper plate method, which is about gone too.

Teiser: Who was that who printed the daguerreotype?

Dean: I've forgotten the gentleman's name.

Teiser: What is that process?

Dean: It's an intaglio process, similar to gravure. I'm not too familiar with some of this. But it's done by photographing the copy onto a piece of copper, etching it, and then practically printing it by hand on a press that's similar to an etching press. In other words, the plate is inked and it's wiped

Dean: and printed.

And the next [Book] Club book was in '61. That was Ah Sin, the Mark Twain and Bret Harte book. That's the last in this [Olmsted] checklist.

From then I did more Schaffner books. I did his book in memory of his second wife [Frances]. It's called Blithe and Buoyant Spirit. It was by John C. Weigel, who wrote the previous two. And. . .

This is bound in tea check paper. . .

Teiser: Tea check paper! Isn't that terribly difficult to handle?

Dean: Yes. It certainly is, and I tried to get out of it. But he wanted it, and so I did it.

Teiser: This is again fine wood engraving, is it not?

Dean: Yes. Frances was Dr. Herman Adler's wife. The doctor and Joe were close friends. And when Dr. Adler died and Joseph Schaffner's first wife died, Joe and Frances married.

Teiser: Here on the title page you've used red and green.

Dean: Yes, green because of the olive motif. She picked a Santa Barbara home above the mission, and there are beautiful old olive trees all around it.

Teiser: Did you make the olive cut?

Dean: Yes. That's a wood engraving, and the little initials.

Teiser: You made the initials too?

Dean: Yes. They are similar to the initials I did in the Conyers Read book but they're smaller. This is filled with wood engraving initials too.

Teiser: Oh, yes. In two colors.

Dean: Quite a few of them in here. [Thumbing through book.] When Frances and Dr. Adler moved to Berkeley -- he worked both for the state and the university for a while -- they bought a home up above the campus by the reservoir. That's why I used it with a view to the Marin hills and the gate. And this is an old stone fountain at the Santa Barbara home. And this is the view from the New York apartment.

Teiser: Did you work from a photograph or did you go to New York?

Dean: No. They gave me a photograph for that. And this is the mission in Santa Barbara, which they can see from their home. They're on the Mission Ridge Road up above the mission.

This is the reproduction of a letter Mrs. Schaffner wrote an adoption agency saying that she

Dean: would be happy to take a child.

Teiser: It's reproduced in green.

Dean: Yes. She always used green ink in her fountain pen, so a good reason for it.

There are not many [copies] alike from the outside physical appearance, because of the great variety in the tea chest paper. Even though we picked one pattern for the most part, they vary considerably.

Teiser: Did you get these from Japan?

Dean: No, I got them from Stevens Nelson in New York, the importers. But it's extremely fragile stuff. It's like firecracker paper. I had to spray every sheet of it, trying to protect it, with clear lacquer.

Teiser: Before you could use it?

Dean: Before I used it at all, yes. Because it's printed with water color inks. If you have any dampness around or on your hands, the color will bleed. So I fixed it with waterproof spray and this also gave it a little more stability, substance, so that the binding paste would take on it. And then it all had to be mounted before I could put it onto the boards, mounted on plain paper. So it was quite a tedious job.

Dean: Then from that I went to the last book I have done for Joe, and this is called A Letter to Carl Sandburg,* again written by John C. Weigel. And this came about because of Weigel's friendship with Sandburg, and of course Joe was a very close friend of Carl's. Carl used to spend quite a bit of time in Schaffner's New York apartment. I mean, when he was traveling he would stop there.

Teiser: What date was this book done?

Dean: This has just been finished. It was done last year, in '68. Mr. Weigel wrote this book, which is really an autobiography, after Sandburg, at the age of 75, wrote his Always the Young Strangers. And when Weigel read it, it immediately reminded him of the similarity in their childhoods and their lives, so Weigel sat down and wrote to Sandburg, making the comparison. Here's a letter that Weigel wrote to Joe.

Teiser: I see. Again reproduced in the same color as the ink. Blue.

Dean: Yes. Weigel always writes in blue.

Teiser: Isn't it fine they all have such distinguished

Teiser: handwritings.

Dean: Yes. We used facsimilies of letters when possible, at other times just the signatures. Here's Mr. Weigel. Mrs. Schaffner took this picture of him.

Teiser: What type is this?

Dean: This is Goudy Modern. It's heavy and a little bit crude. That's why I wanted it, because of Sandburg. This is a [Edward] Steichen photo of Sandburg.

Teiser: Do you print your own halftones?

Dean: No, the photographs are done by a lithographer.

Teiser: Who does them now for you?

Dean: This was done in Berkeley. George Waters did the one in Conyers Read, which I think is undoubtedly the finest that I have ever had. He took considerable pains in doing it and printed it twice rather than just once, which simply wouldn't occur to many printers, I don't think.

Teiser: You mean two impressions on each?

Dean: Yes. After the first printing had been done it was strengthened by printing it again with darker accents. He's an exceptionally fine photographer, which is the prerequisite to any offset work. It all depends on what you get with the camera. And aesthetic photography -- he's a marvelous photographer.

Dean: and has very fine photographic equipment.

Teiser: How then was the cover of this done?

Dean: This is a woodcut. It was done on a piece of plywood to make a simple repeat pattern paper.

Teiser: You use here the grain of the plywood?

Dean: Yes. In that case I think it might have been mahogany. It had a strong grain that does show. Of course it gives it a lighter value than a solid surface would give.

Teiser: Here you've glued on the binder's title, and here you've actually printed it on the cloth?

Dean: No, no. That's a pasted label. The only time I've printed the spine was on the Physiologus. I had to do that after the cases were made. It's a little difficult to do, to feed a case into the press. And my press is very small. It's the smallest Colt, and sometimes I have to stretch it a bit for some of these jobs. [Laughter]

Teiser: What size is it?

Dean: Ten by fifteen. I've printed many jobs on it where the sheet was hanging out about three ways, you know, both sides and down below too. [Laughter]

Teiser: How many pages in one impression?

Dean: Two pages. This is really a large book for it and

Dean: I've printed bigger sheets.

Teiser: Could you put two pages of that on it?

Dean: Yes, I put two on it. But it didn't leave much room for grippers.

RECENT WORK AND THE FUTURE

Dean: Then another nice thing I got to do for Schaffner was some modern mosaics. I have photographs of them here. Their theme is the cock, but I did it in many different ways. My wife and I both worked on these -- we did it in many different designs, combinations of marbles. [Shows color photographs.] They're set in cement, and are about two inches in thickness, I think. And the marble is roughly a quarter of an inch to three-eighths in thickness. But the concrete is the backing for it and holds it together. And then, of course, it was grouted on the surface with pure cement and polished. The pure cement dried a neutral gray which I thought suitable to the rich colors in each.

Teiser: Does this vary from ordinary mosaic work?

Dean: No, no, it's a very common method of the work. You work upside down. In other words, the finished surface is put face down on the cartoon or design -- pasted down. And when it's completed you put a form around it and then fill it with concrete. Then you reverse it and grout it, which fills in all the cracks. And then it's surfaced and polished and treated.

Dean: And these were all set in Sierra slate stone for the finished floor. So this was like little designs that appeared every so often in the reception room floor, slate floor.

Teiser: In New York?

Dean: This is in the New York apartment, yes. It was loads of fun to do.

Teiser: You said, when we spoke earlier, that you were just finishing a book for the Book Club now.

Dean: Yes, a small book.

Teiser: What is that?

Dean: It's called Archy Lee. It's a California fugitive slave case, and was written by Professor Lapp* down at San Mateo. That's being printed largely by my friend Jim Beard up at St. Helena but I've made some cuts for it. I made some cuts for it and printed part of it.

Teiser: I didn't realize he was still doing printing.

Dean: He works at home now.

Teiser: I have met him once, visited his home and saw his press.

Dean: Did you visit the present home, do you think, by

* Rudolph M. Lapp.

Dean: the vineyard?

Teiser: Yes. Delightful.

Dean: Before that they lived downtown and had a separate little press. Then from that he went to a partnership with Vaughn Herdell where they had the letterpress-offset printing combination. Mr. Herdell has the business now.

Teiser: I think I mentioned to him that we were doing this series of interviews, and I think it was he who added his name to the rather long list of people who suggested that I try, if I could, to get you to consent to being interviewed.

Dean: Oh? Well, he's a very close friend of Wilder Bentley. They each had a hand press for their early printing. And, oh, they've just been together more or less ever since meeting in 1932. Wilder goes up there a lot and I think Yolande and Jim go to Wilder's home down here in Berkeley.

Teiser: Wilder Bentley just did not want to be interviewed about his printing. I'm sorry.

Dean: Well, he was one of the great ones as far as the start of lots of the fine printing was concerned.

Teiser: I thought that he was a link between an older tradition and. . .

Dean: Well, he was a student and he was, I guess, a pretty close friend of Porter Garnett's, and I think has a lot to offer.

Teiser: Have you ever worked with him?

Dean: No.

Teiser: Have you worked with anyone besides the Grabhorns and Jim Beard, then?

Dean: No.

Teiser: You're not among those influenced by Porter Garnett?

Dean: I am to some extent through Jim Beard, who knew Porter well. And Bob and Jane Grabhorn took me to visit the Garnetts at their Napa County ranch once. The closest that I think I ever came to Porter Garnett was that I did some murals for Coppa's Restaurant one time. For some reason, the original murals were gone. Porter Garnett was among the group of artists and writers who made the original Coppa's an important part of San Francisco history. In the '30s there was a group of young artists who sort of felt they were going to repeat the thing, I guess, by patronizing Coppa's, and we were given the opportunity to paint some murals for some meals. That's how it was. [Laughter] But it was fun, too.

Teiser: What subjects?

Dean

Dean: Well, it was a huge California landscape thing.

Teiser: What are your thoughts on what you would like a book to be?

Dean: My thoughts on what I would like a book to be are of course based on my abilities as a craftsman. I am first an artist and then a printer -- last of all a typographer. By artist I mean my use of the wood engraving and wood cut, as well as other mediums in the decoration and illustration of books. By printer I mean my interest in using the printing process, principally letterpress, to achieve creative results as often as possible. I certainly appreciate and admire a beautifully designed and printed type page but my book cannot be made up of such pages alone. I would like to print some little books and make them rich with decoration in color. And I would like to print some quite large ones, with bold creative wood cuts. I like a book in which the artist has had a heavy hand.

Teiser: What kinds of work do you want to continue to do?

Dean: Well, Bob Grabhorn said about the time I left the shop that he didn't think I'd ever paint again, and for the most part he's been terribly correct. I think I might do some more painting sometime, and I

Dean: definitely would like to do more mosaic work. I would like very much to do more. And I have projects all ready to go. It's just a matter of getting a little equipment set up again and taking the time to do it.

Teiser: I was about to ask you something about the economics of printing ventures such as you have been operating, but you do so many other things. . .

Dean: That's been a definite problem because so often you should be busy working in the shop, and you'll be sidetracked by the garden. If you like the out-of-doors and you like working in the garden, why it's very often that you see something that has to be done and therefore you go about doing it instead of what perhaps should be done on a job.

And as far as the other abilities if you want to call them that, there is a conflict there. There are times when you are interested in one thing and have to do another. And that's where the economics come in as a rule. I mean, if you have a paying job, one which you know you are going to get a check for when it's completed, it's usually the thing you do rather than set it aside for something that is in doubt as far as pay is concerned. Even though

Dean: it might be very attractive.

Teiser: I was discussing this with the Allens since they are close, I guess, to just devoting themselves purely to printing. They were saying that they thought that anyone who printed full time, after making an initial impact, could make a good enough living. Do you think that's true?

Dean: I wouldn't want to do it commercially. I mean, that wouldn't interest me in the least. But if you can do it. . .

Teiser: Book printing, I mean.

Dean: Well, for the fine things, yes. Limited editions, special things, things that are worthwhile. Then it's not only fun -- I think the people who can do it are limited to those who have, over a period of time, established a reputation.

Teiser: You think it can be done?

Dean: Yes, I think so. It's a matter of contacts and a matter of becoming known for your ability in that field.

Teiser: I've kept asking people in this series: who's coming? Who's going to carry this on?

Dean: Well, I asked Will Carter the other night what he thought about the future of limited, fine printing.

Dean: He said it's increasing. . . [Interrupted by ringing telephone.] I think from what I've learned from people who know quite a bit more than I do that there are lots of new presses being established and lots of young people becoming interested in fine printing.

Teiser: As a hobby, or as a profession?

Dean: I don't know about that. And I don't know what the difficulty in getting good materials is going to do to it. I feel that that's going to be a little more of a handicap in the future than it has been in the past.

Teiser: Lawton Kennedy, who is 'way on the other side in a lot of this -- I think his general point of view is that machine-made materials just as good as handmade are being developed. Do you subscribe to this at all?

Dean: No, I don't. I don't say that the other is not perhaps good enough, but it might not be good enough for me, in that I'm interested in something a little different than I think Lawton is for the most part. In other words, I'm willing to perhaps spend more time trying to do a little bit that's different rather than the whole lot that's exceptional.

Dean: Lawton's an exceptionally fine printer and he does very beautiful work. But he couldn't afford to spend the time that I perhaps do on certain aspects of a given job.

I don't enjoy spending too much time at the press. Just feeding the press is a little bit difficult for me to take. I enjoy seeing what's going to happen, but as soon as I've seen it, then I'd rather do something else. Presswork is therapeutic to a certain point. You can stand there and think about other things while watching the work, you know, and get the work done. But a lot else could be done while you're doing that, too, that would be quite different. [Laughter] And that's what I mean by having various interests, which again I think is often a decided handicap.

Teiser: Did you ever have anyone do presswork for you?

Dean: No. I've had help. I've had some help in working with dampened paper. But I've learned to handle it myself now, so it's just a matter of taking a little more time and doing it without the help. The help has often been a problem. I have a very small place. It's been at home.

Teiser: And you've not sent anything out except these

Teiser: special things, such as illustrations and so forth.

Dean: Yes. And composition, of course, when I couldn't hand-set a book, and also binding, and some job printing. Some of the books have been bound by -- well, I started out by having them bound by Perry Davis, who was operating a very small business and was at the time interested in doing very fine work, just as fine as he could make it. But of course that soon disappeared. He found that he couldn't afford to do that any more. So then you were confronted with either something that was pretty much straight commercial or something that was quite expensive. I mean, if you go to hand binding it's usually prohibitive, unless it's extremely limited.

Teiser: When you have books sewn, who sews them?

Dean: I had Paul Mucci sew the last Schaffner book. He's a young bookbinder, exceptionally fine one. He studied with Peter [Fahey], and Peter told me about him. But it's very expensive. Has to be now, because people can't afford to work for moderate wages any more. It costs too much to live.

Teiser: Back to the subject of the future of fine printing, small edition printing. Are there any young people about here who you feel are adequate to carry it on,

Teiser: who are going to be thirty years from now still printing?

Dean: I'm not familiar with too many young printers, but I know there are many of them and some are doing quite unusual things in their own homes. They are people who aren't in a position where they have to make a living at it. I mean, it may be a family situation where one member is earning a living and the other is spending more time experimenting with printing. And it's resulting in very limited editions of unusual books, handbound or handmade, completely handmade books of, say, contemporary verse or types or art books or one form or another.

Teiser: Do you want to mention anyone who is doing that?

Dean: Well, there is a young woman in Mill Valley, Carol Cunningham, who is doing some very unusual things. And there's another girl, a friend of hers, Joan Abel, who's done some very interesting things. She's an exceptionally fine teacher of children and has been teaching children to print. And when you see that sort of thing going on, it looks encouraging, because if you can get a child interested, why the fire has been lighted and it often takes hold. So I guess it's encouraging to see that there's quite a bit

Dean: going on and that we can hope that it will continue and expand. I think just by contrast it becomes more important. I mean, as everything else becomes more and more commercial and more limited in many ways, this becomes more conspicuous by its varied creativeness.

APPENDIX

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Quarterly News-Letter, Spring 1962.

A Check List of Books Illustrated and/or

Printed by Mallette Dean

Compiled by Duncan H. Olmsted

ARTIST, illustrator, printer—Mallette Dean developed his artistic talents in this order, and now combines all three in his studio-print shop-home at Fairfax, Marin County. Born in Spokane, Washington, in 1907, Mallette came to study at the California School of Fine Arts in 1927, spending some three years there. One of his first major works was a mural at Mt. Zion Hospital, San Francisco, painted in 1930. He also did murals for the post offices at Modesto and Sebastopol, California. He has been a free-lance artist, worked for the Treasury Relief Art Project and the Federal Art Project from 1934 through 1939, and was associated with the Grabhorn Press for some fifteen years, illustrating his first book in 1935. He illustrated books for

Quarterly News-Letter

the Colt Press from 1938 through 1947, and for the Allen Press since 1946, and set up his own print shop soon after World War II, although he did not print his first book until 1953: the *Physiologus* which he illustrated and printed for The Book Club. *Ah Sin*, The Book Club's Christmas publication, is the third book he has illustrated and printed for the Club. In addition, he has illustrated three other Book Club publications.

1935

1. LIFE AMONG THE INDIANS OR: THE CAPTIVITY OF THE OATMAN GIRLS . . . as given by Lorenzo D. and Olive A. Oatman . . . to the author, R. B. Stratton. Wood engravings. 550 copies. Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
2. SAN FRANCISCO PAST AND PRESENT, by Edward F. O'Day. The first few copies had a decorative initial by Mallette Dean, replaced by a typographic initial. 200 copies printed for Charles R. Boden, The Adobe Press, by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
3. SOLSTICE AND OTHER POEMS, by Robinson Jeffers. Wood engraved publisher's device and printer's device. 320 copies printed for Random House by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.

1936

4. FOR KEEPS, by Gertrude E. Mallette. Linoleum cut chapter headings. The Junior Literary Guild and Doubleday, Doran & Co., Inc., New York.
5. WAIT-TO-YAH & THE TAOS TRAIL . . . by Lewis H. Garrard. Linoleum cuts. 550 copies. Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.

1938

6. THE EPICURE IN HAWAII. Recipes gathered by Barbara Thompson. Wood engravings. 1000 copies. Colt Press, San Francisco.
7. FAREWELL SPEECH OF KING EDWARD THE EIGHTH. Colored wood engraving. 200 copies printed for Ransohoffs by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
8. LOLA MONTEZ, by Oscar Lewis. Wood engravings. 750 copies. Colt Press, San Francisco.

The Book Club of California

1939

9. THE EPILOGUE, published by the students of the Sarah Dix Hamlin School, San Francisco. Drawings. 150 copies. Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
10. THE FISHERMAN AND HIS SOUL, by Oscar Wilde. Linoleum cut illustrations and initials. 200 copies printed for Ransohoffs by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
11. KAMEHAMEHA, KING OF THE HAWAIIAN ISLANDS . . . by Marie Louise Burke. Linoleum cuts. 486 copies, of which 90 are illuminated. Colt Press, San Francisco.
12. NINETY YEARS, THE STORY OF WILLIAM PARMER FULLER, by Marjorie January, E. E. Simmons, W. P. Fuller Jr., Mary Louise O'Brien. Pen and ink headpieces. 5000 copies printed for W. P. Fuller & Company by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
13. TAKE YOUR BIBLE IN ONE HAND, THE LIFE OF WILLIAM HENRY THOMES . . . by George R. Stewart. Marginal illustrations and press mark. 750 copies. Colt Press, San Francisco.
14. THE TERRY-BRODERICK DUEL, by Carroll Douglas Hall. Wood engravings. 750 copies. Colt Press, San Francisco.

1940

15. THE ENCANTADAS OR, ENCHANTED ISLES, by Herman Melville. Brush drawings and illustrative initials in color. 550 copies printed for William P. Wreden, Burlingame, California, by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
16. THE EPILOGUE, published by the students of the Sarah Dix Hamlin School, San Francisco. Drawings in color. 130 copies. Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
17. THE GOLD RUSH SONG BOOK . . . compiled by Eleanora Black and Sidney Robertson. Scratch board drawings. Two editions: in the first, or regular, edition the decorations are uncolored; in the second, or special, edition the decorations are colored by hand. Colt Press, San Francisco.
18. QUEEN CALAFIA'S LAND, an historical sketch of California, by Louie Butler Elwood. Pen and ink initials and headpieces. 325 copies printed for the author by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.

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1941

19. THE BOYS IN THE BACK ROOM . . . by Edmund Wilson. Mounted on the front cover is a paper label bearing Mallette Dean's first Colt Press mark. 1500 copies; of this number 100 copies were printed on special paper. Colt Press, San Francisco.
20. THE EPICURE IN IMPERIAL RUSSIA, by Marie Alexandre Markévich. Decorations. 500 copies. Colt Press, San Francisco.

1945

21. THE POET AND THE MESSENGER, by Milton S. Ray. Initials by Mallette Dean. 250 copies printed for the author by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
22. THE QUEEN OF CALIFORNIA . . . by Edward Everett Hale. Colt Press mark by Mallette Dean on title page. 500 copies. Colt Press, San Francisco.
23. TWENTY-SIX ADDRESSES DELIVERED DURING THE WAR YEARS BY HENRY J. KAISER . . . Illustrative initials. 30 copies. Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.

1946

24. THE DIARY OF PATRICK BREEN. Linoleum cuts. 300 copies printed for The Book Club of California by The L-D Allen Press, San Francisco.
25. THE DISCOVERY OF FLORIDA . . . by a Fidalgo of Elvas. Colored linoleum cuts and initials. 280 copies printed for The Book Club of California by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
26. JOHNNY APPLESEED, by Dan Tothoroh. Linoleum cut in color. 1600 copies printed for the Bohemian Club of San Francisco by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
27. A LETTER FROM ANTHONY TROLLOPE DESCRIBING A VISIT TO CALIFORNIA IN 1875. Colored wood engravings. 500 copies printed for the Colt Press by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
28. MAURIZIUS FOREVER, by Henry Miller. Illustrations from original drawings and water colors by the author interpreted on linoleum blocks. 500 copies. Colt Press, San Francisco.
29. VIGNETTES OF WRITERS AND ARTISTS, by Alfred M. Cressler. Decorative rules and initials. 300 copies printed for Mrs. Alfred M. Cressler by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.

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1947

30. CALIFORNIA INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, Remarks by Robert A. Millikan and James R. Page . . . pen and ink drawings. 500 copies printed for the California Institute of Technology by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
31. THE JOURNAL OF JULIUS RODMAN, by Edgar A. Poe. Colored linoleum cuts. 500 copies printed for the Colt Press by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
32. 920 O'FARRELL STREET, by Harriet Lane Levy. Headpiece drawings. Doubleday & Company, Inc., Garden City, N.Y.
33. THE PHILOSOPHY OF QUALITY, A WAY OF LIFE, by Charles Flammer. Wood engraved initials. 500 copies printed for the author by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
34. SAN FRANCISCO IS YOUR HOME, by Samuel Dickson. Brush drawing chapter headings. Stanford University Press, Stanford, California.

1948

35. AGE HIGH THE FRISCO DETECTIVE . . . by C. E. Tripp. Colored linoleum cuts. 500 copies printed for The Book Club of California by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
36. ESSAYS OF MONTAIGNE. Pen and ink drawings (hand illuminated by Dorothy Allen). 200 copies. The L-D Allen Press, Hillsborough, California.
37. THE HISTORY OF SUSANNA. Decorative initials and linoleum cuts in color. 400 copies. Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
38. THE HISTORY OF TYPE AND PRINTING IN EASY LESSONS. Linoleum cut portraits. 3000 copies printed for Mackenzie and Harris Inc., by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
39. THE LUCK OF ROARING CAMP, by Bret Harte. Linoleum cuts. 300 copies printed for Ransohoffs by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
40. MLISS, by Bret Harte. Initials and linoleum cuts in color. 300 copies. Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
41. THE PIONEER PRESS OF CALIFORNIA, by Carl I. Wheat. Wood engravings in color. 450 copies designed and produced by Jane Grabhorn and printed for Joseph A. Sullivan (Biobooks, Oakland, California) by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.

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1949

42. *COMMONWEALTH V GORDON ET AL.* The opinion of Judge Bok, March 18, 1949. Decorative initial. 500 copies printed for Blanche and Alfred Knopf by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.

1950

43. *ACROSS THE PLAINS*, by Robert Louis Stevenson. Pen and ink drawings. 200 copies. The L-D Allen Press, Hillsborough, California.
44. *A CHRISTMAS CAROL*, by Charles Dickens. Floriated linoleum cut initials in color. 250 copies printed for Ransohoffs by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
45. *THE HOUSE IN MALLORCA*, by Ernest Ingold. Linoleum cuts. Printed for Paul Elder & Company, San Francisco, by Taylor & Taylor, San Francisco.
46. *THIS SUDDEN EMPIRE, CALIFORNIA*, the story of The Society of California Pioneers, 1850 to 1950, by Ruth Teiser. Wood engravings. Printed for The Society of California Pioneers, San Francisco, by Taylor & Taylor, San Francisco.

1951

47. *BRIDLES AND SPURS*, by Arthur Machen. Title page and chapter head drawings. 178 copies printed for the Rowfant Club of Cleveland by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
48. *THE LOST YEARS*, by Oscar Lewis. Linoleum cuts. Alfred A. Knopf, New York.
49. *WHAT MEN LIVE BY*, by Leo Tolstoy. Wood engravings (hand colored by Dorothy Allen). 150 copies. The L-D Allen Press, Belvedere, California.

1953

50. *THE HIDDEN TREASURES . . .* by Honoré de Balzac. Wood engravings (illuminated by Dorothy Allen). 160 copies. The L-D Allen Press, Kentfield, California.
51. *PHYSIOLOGUS, THE VERY ANCIENT BOOK OF BEASTS, PLANTS AND STONES*, by Francis J. Carmody. Illustrations and initials (hand colored by Vivien Dean). 325 copies printed for The Book Club of California by Vivien and Mallette Dean, Fairfax, California.

The Book Club of California

52. **ROUGHING IT IN CALIFORNIA**, by Mark Twain. Colored linoleum cuts. 200 copies. The L-D Allen Press, Kentfield, California.

1954

53. **THE PRIVATE JOURNALS OF STENDHAL**, 1811-1817. Wood engravings. 175 copies. The L-D Allen Press, Kentfield, California.
54. **SAN FRANCISCO STREET NAMES**. Sketches of the lives of pioneers for whom San Francisco streets are named, by Henry C. Carlisle. Wood engravings. Printed for the American Trust Company, San Francisco.
55. **SNOW-SHOE THOMPSON**, by Dan De Quille. Title page linoleum cut. 210 copies printed for Glen Dawson, Los Angeles, by the L-D Allen Press, Kentfield, California.

1955

56. **DEEP ROOTS**. The History of Blake, Moffitt & Towne, pioneers in paper since 1855, by Neill C. Wilson. Wood engravings. Printed for Blake, Moffitt & Towne, San Francisco, by Taylor & Taylor, San Francisco.
57. **SAINT PATRICK OF ENGLAND**, by Judge William F. James. Wood engraving. 200 copies printed for the author by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.

1956

58. **ADVENTURES IN CALIFORNIA** of Zakahar Tchitchinoff. Colored wood engravings. 225 copies printed for Glen Dawson, Los Angeles, by Mallette Dean, Fairfax, California.
59. **THE NOBLE KNIGHT PARIS & THE FAIR VIENNE**. Wood engravings (hand colored by Dorothy Allen). 230 copies. The Allen Press, Kentfield, California.
60. **THEMES IN MY POEMS**, by Robinson Jeffers. Woodcut illustrations in color. 350 copies printed for The Book Club of California by Mallette Dean, Fairfax, California.

1958

61. **GENTLE AND BELOVED FRIEND**. Remarks by John C. Weigel at the memorial services for Sara Halle Schaffner, May 13, 1957. Wood engraving and initial letters. 240 copies printed by Mallette Dean, Fairfax, California.

Quarterly News-Letter

62. GERMAN TRAVELERS IN CALIFORNIA, by Henry Miller Madden. Wood engravings. 125 copies printed for The Roxburghe Club of San Francisco by Mallette Dean, Fairfax, California.

1959

63. THE DUCHOW JOURNAL, A Voyage from Boston to California 1852. Pen and ink drawings. The book was laid out at The Allen Press. 200 copies. Printed and published by Mallette Dean, Fairfax, California.
64. THE SEA DIARY OF FR. JUAN VIZCAINO TO ALTA CALIFORNIA, 1769. Linoleum cuts and wood engravings. 225 copies printed for Glen Dawson, Los Angeles, by Mallette Dean, Fairfax, California.

1960

65. HUEY, THE ENGINEER, by Jesse Stuart. Wood engravings. 585 copies. James E. Beard, St. Helena, California.
66. LA PANZA, by Richard H. Dillon. Linoleum cut. 200 copies printed for William P. Wreden for presentation to the Zamorano Club of Los Angeles and The Roxburghe Club of San Francisco by the Grabhorn Press, San Francisco.
67. THE SPLENDID IDLE FORTIES, Six Stories of Old California by Gertrude Atherton. Decorative linoleum cut initials. 150 copies. The Allen Press, Kentfield, California.

1961

68. AH SIN, a dramatic work by Mark Twain and Bret Harte. Colored woodcuts. 450 copies printed for The Book Club of California by Vivien and Mallette Dean, Fairfax, California.
69. CHARLES KRUG WINERY, 1861-1961, by Francis L. Gould. Linoleum cuts. Printed for the Charles Krug Winery by Herdell & Beard, St. Helena, California.

1912-1962
A PORTFOLIO OF BOOK CLUB PRINTERS



THE BOOK CLUB OF CALIFORNIA ♦ SAN FRANCISCO

 MY RELATIONSHIP with The Book Club of California began seventeen years after my introduction in 1934 to the Grabhorn Press and beautiful printing. Though I bought a 10 x 15 Colt's Armory press in 1939, it was used mostly for greeting cards and bookplates. Fourteen years passed before I thought seriously of buying type and producing a book (my experience with type had been to set "The quick brown fox...", under the supervision of Robert Grabhorn). In late 1951 Lewis Allen suggested that I illustrate and print a book of beasts, plants and stones, translated by Francis J. Carmody from Greek and other languages, consisting of forty-nine subjects all suited to my interests and abilities. I bought (this) French Elzevir, originally cast for and owned by John Henry Nash. After making some trial drawings and linoleum cuts, I printed sample pages and showed them to the directors of the Club. They decided to publish the book. (A rejected trial woodcut is shown opposite).

From many samples of fine papers I selected a French mould made sheet for the text and English Invicta parchment—no longer made—for the binding. The latter was hard to handle, but looked like translucent vellum. I discovered that printing the pattern cut on the reverse side gave an interesting shadow effect.

As well as unfamiliar problems and disappointments, I found pleasure and excitement in this new creative venture. On printing days, heavy stiff ink had to be beaten and drier added. Makeready sheets were prepared with layers of tissue paper to give the forms



of type and linoleum an even impression. After eight pages had been printed, the type was distributed, then set again with new initials and illustrations, where they were needed. The stacks of finished sheets with hand-colored linoleum cuts, grew slowly. When the work was unfinished after a year, the Club delayed publication nine months and gave me another check. Eventually, The Physiologus was announced to Club members as the 1953 Christmas book.

The second book printed for the Club, Themes In My Poems by Robinson Jeffers, was published in 1956. It was decorated with linear woodcuts printed in two and three colors. This was not, however, my first experience with Jeffers' work. His Roan Stallion provided the subject for a fresco mural decoration I painted in 1929. In 1936, two wood-engravings and a binding paper cut were made for Solstice and Other Poems printed by the Grabhorns.

For some reason I was less at ease with the third Club book Ah Sin by Mark Twain and Bret Harte. Although I did not want to illustrate specific scenes or incidents, my original thoughts on decoration did not develop. As always, various designs and many page proofs were made, then after trying several combinations of type faces and ornaments for the running heads, I engraved the ornaments on old types. In addition to adding more design and color to the book, the vignette woodcuts of birds were used to introduce the acts. Also, they gave me a chance to have fun with a favorite subject. To me, the most important and appreciated aspect of printing for the Club is that printers are free to design as they please, and are not asked to submit proofs.

On other Club publications, I have enjoyed working with the Grabhorns, the Allens and Adrian Wilson. Occasionally, I have done stationery, announcements and cards. In 1951, 1952 and 1961-62, shows of mine were at the Club. I am grateful to the Club officers and committee members, to printer friends and others who have helped in many ways to make my work for the Club possible.



A PORTFOLIO OF BOOK CLUB PRINTERS, 1912-1962: The Book Club of California's 50th Anniversary Keepsake consists of twelve folders, each printed by or about presses associated with the printing history of the Book Club. This folder has been printed by Mallette Dean, Fairfax, California.

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Ruth Teiser

Grew up in Portland, Oregon; came to the Bay Area in 1932 and has lived here ever since.

Stanford, B.A., M.A. in English, further graduate work in Western History.

Newspaper and magazine writer in San Francisco since 1943, writing on local history and economic and business life of the Bay Area.

Book reviewer for the San Francisco Chronicle since 1943.

As correspondent for national and western graphic arts magazines for more than a decade, came to know the printing community.

